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THE

WORKS

OF

HENRY MACKENZIE, Esq.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

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VOLUME EIGHTH.

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DUNCAN.

A FRAGMENT FROM AN OLD SCOTS MANUSCRIPT.

THE following ballad was an almost extempore production, written when I was a mere lad, in imitation of the abrupt and laconic description of the ancient Scottish ballad, some of which had been collected and published about that time. It was sent, under the above fictitious title, to the editor of *The London Chronicle*, who published it without any comment; and such was the state of politics at the time, that some of his readers objected to the first line,

"Saw ye the Thane o' meikle pride,"

as applying personally to Lord Bute, who used to be known by that appellation. It was afterwards inserted in Clark's Collection of Ancient Scottish Ballads as genuine, though one should have thought the imitation was so inartificial as might have saved it from the sin of forgery.

DUNCAN.

(1762.)

A FRAGMENT FROM AN OLD SCOTS MANUSCRIPT.

"Saw ye the thane o' meikle pride,
"Red anger in his e'e?"—
"I saw him not, nor care," he cry'd,
"Red anger frights na' me.

"For I have stuid whar honour bade,
"Though death trade on his heel:
"Mean is the crest that stoops to fear,
"Nae sic may Duncan feel."

Hark! hark! or was it but the wind
That through the ha' did sing?
Hark! hark again! a warlike shout!
The black woods round do ring.

"'Tis na for nought," bauld Duncan cry'd,
"Sic shoutings, on the wind;"
Syne up he started frae his seat,
A thrang o' spears behind.

"Haste, haste, my valiant hearts," he said,
"Anes mair to follow me;
"We'll meet thae shouters by the burn,
"I guess wha they may be."

But wha is he that speeds sae fast,
Frae the slaw marching thrang?
Sae frae the mirk cloud shoots a beam
The sky's blue face alang.

Some messenger it is, mayhap;
Then not of peace I trow:—
"My master, Duncan, bade me rin,
"And say these words to you.

"Restore again that bluming rose
"Your rude hand pluckt awa;
"Restore again my Mary fair,
"Or you shall rue the fa."

Three strides the gallant Duncan tuik,
And shuik his forward spear;
" Gae tell thy master, saft-chin'd youth,
" We are na wont to fear:

" He comes na on a wassel rout
" Of revel, sport, and play;
" Our swords gart fame proclaim us men,
" Lang ere this ruefu' day.

" The rose I pluckt of right was mine;
" Our hearts together grew
" Like twa sweet roses on ae stalk,
" Frae hate to love she flew."

Swift as a winged shaft he sped:—
" Bald Duncan said in jeer,
' Gae tell thy master, saft-chin'd youth,
' We are na wont to fear:

' He comes na on a wassel rout
' Of revel, sport, and play;
' Our swords gart fame proclaim us men,
' Lang ere this ruefu' day.

'The rose I pluckt of right was mine;
'Our hearts together grew
'Like twa sweet roses on ae stalk,
'Frae hate to love she flew."

He stampt his foot upo' the ground,
And thus in wrath did say,
"God strike my saul, if frae this field
"We baith in life shall gae!"

He waved his hand, the pipes they play'd,
The targets clatter'd round;
And now between the meeting faes
Was little space of ground.—

But wha is she that rins sae fast?
Her feet nae stap they find;
Sae swiftly rides the milky cloud
Upon the summer's wind.

Her face a mantle screen'd before,
She shaw'd of lily hue;
Sae frae the grey mist breaks the sun,
To drink the morning dew.

" Alake! my friends, what sight is this?
" O stap your rage," she cry'd;
" Whar love with honey'd lip should be,
" Mak not a breach sae wide.

" Can then my uncle draw his sword,
" My husband's breast to bleed?
" Or can my sweet lord do to him,
" Sic foul and ruthless deed?

" Bethink thee, uncle, of the time,
" My gray-hair'd father died;
" Frae whar your shrill horn struik the wood,
" He sent for you wi' speed.

' My brother! guard my bairn,' he said,
' She has nae father soon;
' Regard her, Donald, as your ain,
' I'll ask nae ither boon.'

" Can these brave men, who but of late
" Together chaced the deer,
" Against their comrades bend their bows
" In bluidy hunting here?"

She spake, while trickling ran the tears
  Her blushing cheek alang;
And silence, like a heavy cloud,
  O'er a' the warriors hang.

Then stapt the red-haired Malcolm forth,
  Threescore his years and three,
Yet a' the strength of strongest youth,
  In sic an eld had he.

Nae pity was there in his breast,
  For war alane he loved;
His grey een sparkled at the sight
  Of plunder, death, and bluid.

"What, shall our hearts of steel," he said,
  "Bend to a woman's sang?
"Or can her words our honour quit,
  "For sic dishonest wrang?

"For this did a' thae warriors come,
  "To hear an idle tale?
"And o'er our death-accustom'd arms,
  "Shall silly tears prevail?"

They gied a shout, their bows they tuik,
They clash'd their steely swords,
Like the loud waves of Barra's shore,
There was nae room for words.

A cry the weeping Mary gied,—
"O uncle, hear my prayers!
"Heed na' that man o' bluidy luik"—
She had nae time for mair.

For in the midst anon there came
A blind unweeting dart,
That glanc'd frae aff her Duncan's targe,
And strack her to the heart.

A while she stagger'd, syne she fell,
And Duncan see'd her fa';
Astound' he stuid, for in his limbs
There was nae power at a':

The spear he meant at faes to fling,
Stuid fix'd within his hand,
His lips, half open, cou'd na' speak,
His life was at a stand.

Sae the black stump of some auld aike,
With arms in triumph dight,
Seems to the traveller like a man;
* * * * * * * *

Cætera desunt.

KENNETH.

The notice attracted by the preceding attempt, was so flattering, as well as unlooked for, as to induce me to bring out another imitation of the same kind, under the title of KENNETH.

"I weird, I weird, hard-hearted lord,
"Thy fa' shall soon be seen;
"Proud was the lily of the morn,
"The cauld frost nipp'd or e'en.

"Thou leugh'st in scorn when puir men weep'd,
"And strack the lowly down;
"Sae shall nae widow weep for thine,
"When a' their joys are flown.

"This night ye drink the sparkly wine,
"I redd ye drink your fill,
"The morrow's sun shall drink your bluid,
"Afore he reach the hill.

"I see their snaw-maned horses ride;
"Their glittering swords they draw,
"Their swords that shall na glitter lang
"Till Kenneth's pride shall fa'.

"The black dog yowl'd; he saw the sight
"Nae man but I could see:
"High on fair Margaret's breast her sheet,*
"And deadly fixed her ee."

Sae spak the Seer; wild in his een
His frighted spirit gaz'd;
Pale were his cheeks, and stiff his hair,
Like boary bristles rais'd.

* It is a well known opinion among believers in the *second-sight* in the Highlands, that the shade or figure of a person who is soon to die, appears to the Seer for some time previously to the person's death, covered with a winding sheet, and that the nearness of the event is in proportion to the height of the sheet upon the figure.

"My son, my son, may peace be there
"What none William stands?"
"We are the lilies," answer'd he,
"May their mind wett our hands."

"What means my William by sic word?
"Whase hind would William spill?
"I thought that horn had blown in peace,
"That shuik the night sae still."

She looked, but nane durst answer ought;
Till gallant William said,
"Aft has my mother bade us joy,
"When we to battail gade:

"Again her hands may work the plaid
"For him that fought the best;
"Again may I hing up my targe
"Upon the pin to rest.

"But William never lived to flee,
"Nor did his mother hear
"A warrior cry on William's name,
"That was na heard for fear.

"And if we fa', my gallant friends,
"We shall na fa' alane;
"Some honest hand will write our deids,
"Upon the tallest stane."—

"Haste, Kenneth, haste, for in the field
"The fire-e'ed Walter rides;
"His men that come sae thrang wi' haste,
"For slaw delay he chides."—

"By Mary we will meet him there!"
The angry William cry'd;
"Thy son will try this lion-fae,
"Do you wi' Margaret bide."—

"Na, on my faith! the sword of youth
"Thy father yet can wield;
"If I shrink back frae fiercest faes,
"May babies mock my eild!"

Syne forth they rushed; before the yate
The warriors falded out;
Lord William smil'd upon their ranks,
They answer'd wi' a shout.—

" Rin, Page, and say to Walter thus;
' What seek thae warriors here?
' Or why the din of fiery war
' Astounds the peaceful ear?'

Swift ran the Page:—" Thus Kenneth says,
' What seek thae warriors here?
' Or why the din of fiery war
' Astounds the peaceful ear?'—

Now thrice he turned his dark blue een,
And thrice his big breath drew,
And thrice he luik'd as men are wont
At some strange sight to do.

" Gae tell thy master, frae this arm
" Mine answer will I gie;
" Remind him of his tyrant deeds,
" And bid him answer me:

" Wha wast that slew my father dear,
" And bar'd my castle wa'?
" Wha wast that bade wild ruin bruid
" Whar pipes did glad the ha'?"

Nor half way had the message sped,
When their tough bows they drew;
But far attour the warriors' heads
The shafts for anger flew.

"Sae ever shute Lord Kenneth's faes,"
The vaunting William said;
"Wi' this I war na wi' the wind,"
And drew his glittering blade.

Bald Walter sprang frae aff his steid,
And drave him cross the lee:
"Curs'd be the name of that base coward,
"That could but think to flee."

Firmly he set his sturdy foot,
And firm his targe he bare;
"Never may Walter greet his friends,
"If Kenneth see him mair."—
* * * * * * * * *

Multa desunt.

Fair Margaret wi' her maidens sate
Within the painted wa';
She started at ilk breath of wind,
That whistled through the ha':

"Wha was't that gied the cry below,
"Say, page, does ill betide?"
"Kenneth and William baith are slain,
"Mak haste, mak haste, and ride."

Her maidens scriech'd, but ony speech,
Nor wail of wae had she:
She bowed her head, and sair she sigh'd,
And cald death clos'd her e'e.—

A SOLILOQUY.

This was a production of the same early period with the two former, though of a very different cast from them. It has little poetry, but, I think, some feeling; and, it may be, was the produce of more feeling than it speaks; a distinction necessary to be attended to in that sort of characteristic biography which a young man's early compositions afford. I make this remark, with the same apology for its egotism, as is contained in the introduction to this new edition of my Works.

HAVE I not sometimes blessed my lowly fate,
That gave no conscious pang of vice to sting;
That bade me not be corrupt with the great,
Nor wafted wealth upon dishonour's wing?

Yet have I wished, (what mortal wishes not?)
A little something more than I possess;
A small addition to my humble lot,
And, wanting that, I hold my little less.

Perhaps if e'en the moderate wish was given,
A very competence, a life of ease,
Perhaps the better is the will of Heaven,
The less laborious scene would fail to please.

Oft have I seen the russet-covered hind,
With cheery whistle glad the early morn;
No anxious forecast presses on his mind,
To barren life's unchequered prospect born.

Ambitious aim he envies not or knows,
No study weans him from his midnight bed;
Content, if health alone its bliss bestows,
With honest hands to earn the coarsest bread.

Say, is not all the pomp of youthful phrase,
The swelling hope, the throbbing wish of fame,
Say, is not all the fire your fancies raise,
An empty sound, an unsubstantial name?

See the bold youth to martial deeds aspire,
While keen expectance in his bosom glows;
So caught Pelides all the warrior's fire,
When midst the nymphs the dreaded spear
he chose.

Have we not seen him chace the phantom far,
Through every danger, every hardship press;
Through all the wasteful ravages of war,
His fame the greater, but his joys the less?

Have we not seen him by the fickle tide
Of courtly favour,—O accursed decree!
The dear-won honours of his blood denied,
And sunk to care, oblivion, poverty?

Have we not heard him count his perils o'er,
And sigh that e'er he left the blissful shade;
Have we not heard him count each happy hour,
And weep that e'er he left the gentle maid?

The silver head of story-telling age,
From the fond talk hath blotted manhood's prime;
The joys of childhood all the tale engage,
When no lean care sat brooding upon time.

"Beneath yon hill,—the hill was beauteous then,
Now lordly masters have inclosed it round,—
How gay we sported in the flowery glen,
Or lightly tripped it o'er the fairy ground

Perhaps if e'en the moderate wish was given,
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"Beneath yon hill,—the hill was beauteous then,
Now lordly masters have inclosed it round,—
How gay we sported in the flowery glen,
Or lightly tripped it o'er the fairy ground

"How busy have we pluckt the rushes crop,
Where the clear pool reflects the willow green,
While laughing girlets gleaned the pearly drop,
The May-morn dew upon the daisy seen!"

What then is life? A miserable scene!
A dismal compound of the deepest woes
Where the least active is the least serene,
And the least feeling, least of misery knows.

Would I then wish to check the mirthful hour,
Lest after-grief should curse the laughter past,
For others ills no piteous drop to pour,
Relieved affliction's grateful joy to taste?

Scorned be the mean, insensate, dull extreme,
The low, the brutish, mere-existent part,
Touched by no spark of that celestial flame,
That gives its rapture to the generous heart!

But how resolve?—to do the good we will,
Is oft to risk the happiness we have;
E'en Heaven requites us oft with seeming ill,
Nor keeps a record of the alms we gave.

From Abel's murder, to the passing day,
The good have suffered, and the good complain:
How long will Heaven the vengeful bolt delay,
When shew that we are virtuous—not in vain!

Come then, Religion! come, thou smiling maid!
With blue-eyed Peace beneath thy snowy wing:
Come where cold Reason needs a seraph's aid,
To give the soul its own extatic spring.

Prescribe no human bounds to Virtue's flight;
Wide as its wish expand the beam of Joy;
And point those regions to our better sight,
Where bliss eternal reigns, without fell pain's annoy.

POETRY AND BUSINESS,

A MORAL TALE.

THERE are four of those Moral Tales in the Note-Book from which this was taken. I know not whence I had borrowed their didactic form, for at that time I had not read *Moore's Fables*. There is a sort of *naiveté*, and some observation of manners, (such as a lad who had seen little might observe) amidst the prosaic expression and trite morality which will be readily perceived in this specimen of them.

In this one is feelingly mentioned that bashfulness under which I have so often suffered myself, and had so often seen merit suffer. A few pages after, in the same Note-Book, are some lines, whether part of any larger poem, or an independent fragment, I cannot

certainly recollect, referring to the distress which a young man, under the influence of this feeling, experiences in his approach to, or intercourse with, persons to whom, from their superior rank or fortune, he has been accustomed to look up with deference and awe; and containing a resentful philippic against those underling attendants on greatness, from whose contempt or indifference it is probable I had often suffered in silence.

Curse on the fops of that pernicious race,
Who near to greatness still assert a place!
Shame on the great, who dully tame submit
To impudence, that steals the name of wit,
While Folly's shafts unweaponed Wisdom wound,
And strike the modest merits to the ground!
Ye little know, ye silken sons of pride,
Who midst the idiot scene at ease reside,
What trifles light to sense, to reason vain,
Burn in their cheeks, and o'er their reason reign.
The spacious court, the still abode of state,
The giant knocker on the columned gate,
The powdered footman, with a look aslant,
That proudly mutters half his saucy grant,—
These are the guards that wait on grandeur's seat,
And give their fluttering hearts a stronger beat:
Nor yet these guards alone surround the great,
Within, a baser crew of menials wait;
To all the rich the titled fool resigned,
Slaves to his nod, and pathics of the mind;

Trained like his dogs to watch their master's eye,
To fetch and carry scandal and a lie;
Laugh at the jest on trembling merit thrown,
And add the little malice of their own.—
Know ye the pain you give? his blushes shew it;—
Ye have no blushes, ye can never know it.

POETRY AND BUSINESS,

A MORAL TALE.

A YOUTH there was, whose moderate parts
Had borrowed something from the arts;
Some sense he had, and some small knowledge
Of books had gained at school and college;
Some little wit, but little known
To those whose wit in circles shone;
For show, I never yet could find,
He had in person or in mind;—
For some there are whom Nature makes
Scarce for their own or others sakes,
But just to try if she can plan
The first great outlines of a man;

And having penciled out the soul,
Throws in her blush, and spoils the whole.
This foolish feeling, to say truth,
Oft marred the figure of the youth;
And often when he meant to speak,
He felt the censor warm his cheek,
Drew back, by foolish fear betrayed,
And laughed at what some idiot said:
Thought much, nay sometimes he was known
To speak most fluently alone;
Pitied a fool, a fop abhorred;
And had no patron of a lord.
With this small stock, I blush to tell,
By some strange blunder it befel
He grew a poet, that's to say,
A poet in a harmless way;
Wrote some few trifles, which sometimes
He took for tolerable rhymes:
For never yet was strain so high,
But some would scorn, and tell you why;
And never yet was strain so low,
That its fond father thought it so.
Him, when he heard some friend relate
The pompous pleasures of the great,

And tell, with envious wish, of some,
Whom fortune blessed with *half a plum*,
Him, o'er a glass of mellow ale,
I've heard repeat the following tale:—

It chanced a poet, who had strayed
From forth the hallowed grove or shade,
In meditation reckless grown
Which way he went, approached the town.
Just then a cit, a sober cit,
Who laughed at every thing like wit,
Tir'd with the city's morning toil,
Came forth to breathe himself awhile;
Though 'twas his custom to declare
He valued not a fig the air;
Round were his chops, and round his paunch,
He walked—for stomach to a haunch.
Our youth, whose eyes few objects drew,
Was just upon him e'er he knew;
The senior stopped, and touched his hat,
And talked of weather, and all that;
Or glanced on some such common things,
As fates of empires, and of kings:

Then (as his subjects scarcer grew,
And memory failed for something new,)
He spoke of more important matters,
His stock, his creditors, and debtors;
And summing up the total life,
Lugg'd in that great discount—his wife.
The Bard, who never thought at all
How stocks might rise or stocks might fall,
Began with all a poet's fire
To talk of Muses and the lyre;
Quoted, and much enlarged upon it,
The swelling ode, or quainter sonnet;
Then tragic beauties next to shew,
Rehearsed the melting Otway's woe;
Or while the merchant stared and wondered,
With Shakespeare's horrors raved and thunder'd.
The Cit, by this time half afraid,
His strange companion first surveyed,
('Twas far from Moorfields, and the man
Looked calmer now,) at last began:—
"I don't know, sir, how you're inclined,
But, to speak plainly, in my mind,
I would not give that bit of straw
For all the verse I ever saw;

It may be soft, it may be fine,
But can it help a man to dine?
Or do its makers starve upon it?
The very fools themselves will own it.
Give me the *stuff*, the stuff, good sir!
That makes an old man's spirits stir;
Make me but warm and snug in that,
And all the rest will follow pat:
A neat-built little country box,
Fitted for sober city folks,
With a small square of grass before,
And turkies gabbling at the door,
So near, that with an easy ride
A man may breakfast in Cheapside:
This, with a bottle of good wine,
And two or three Sunday's friends to dine,
Is all a man would wish to share,
And be as happy as—a mayor."—
"Ignobly thought!" the Bard rejoined:
"O sordid apathy of mind!
Give me, ye Powers! a nobler lot,
Than just to mix with earth and rot;
With reason and with verse combined,
To profit and delight mankind,

Dying, to leave a deathless name,
And reap the freshest wreath of fame."—
  The Cit had answered, but between
The radiant form of Truth was seen;
And turning to the astonished pair,
Was heard this sentence to declare:—
  "Each thinks aright, except in this,
That his companion thinks amiss.
Why should the deaf, because he found
No pleasure in the organ's sound,
Pronounce his neighbour fool, who stood
To gaze upon some gilded wood?
Or why his neighbour call him sot,
Whose unnerved ear received it not?
You, who with more exalted aim,
Would reap the freshest wreath of fame,
Why wonder if another thinks
Him blest, who better eats and drinks,
And, be the future as it may,
Obeys the feeling of to-day?
Each in the system of mankind
Performs the part by Heaven assigned,
And therefore each has this reward,
Himself the happier to regard;

For if some cases you exclude
Of ill excessive, or of good,
All happiness is as you take it,
And life the thing your fancies make it.

THE

OLD BACHELOR.

AFTER THE MANNER OF SPENSER.

The idea of this and the following portrait was probably taken from Shenstone's *Schoolmistress*, published not long before they were written.

I.

In Phœbus' region, while some bards there be
That sing of battles and the trumpet's roar;
Yet these, I ween, more powerful bards than me,
Above my ken on eagle pinions soar.
Haply a scene of meaner view to scan,
Beneath their laurel'd praise my verse may give;
To trace the features of unnoticed man;
Deeds, else forgotten, in the verse may live:
Her lore mayhap instructive sense may teach
From deeds of humbler growth, within my lowly reach.

II.

A wight there was, who, single and alone,
Had crept from vigorous youth to waning age,
Nor e'er was worth, nor e'er was beauty known
His heart to captive, or his thought engage:
Some feeble joyaunce though his conscious mind
Might female worth or beauty give to wear,
Yet to the nobler sex he held confined
The genuine graces of the soul sincere;
And well could shew, with saw, and proverb quaint,
All semblance woman's soul, and all her beauty paint.

III.

In plain attire this wight apparel'd was,
(For much he conn'd of frugal lore and knew,)
Nor, till some day of larger note might cause,
From iron-bound chest his better garb he drew:
But when the Sabbath-day might challenge more,
Or feast or birth-day should it chance to be,
A glossy suit devoid of stain he wore,
And gold his buttons, glanced so fair to see;
Gold clasped his shoon, by maiden brushed so sheen,
And his rough beard he shaved, and donn'd his linen clean.

IV.

But for his common garb, a coat he wore,
A faithful coat, that long its lord had known,
That once was black, but now was black no more,
Attinged by various colours not its own.
All from his nostrils was the front embrowned,
And down the back ran many a greasy line;
While here and there his social moments owned
The generous signet of the purple vine.
Brown o'er the bent of eld his wig appeared,
Like trailing tail of fox by hunters sore affeir'd.

V.

One serving-maid he had, like turtle true,
But not like turtle, gentle, soft, and kind,
For many a time her tongue bewrayed the shrew,
And in meet words unpacked her peevish mind:
Ne formed was she to raise the soft desire,
That stirs the tingling blood in youthful vein;
Ne formed was she to light the tender fire,
By many a bard ysung in many a strain:
Hook'd was her nose, and countless wrinkles told,
What no man durst, I ween, that she was waxen old.

VI.

When the clock told the wonted hour was come
When from his nightly cups the wight withdrew,
Right patient would she watch his wending home,
Till at the door his custom'd rap she knew.
If long his time was past, and leaden sleep
O'er her tir'd eye-lids gan his reign to stretch,
Oft would she curse that men such hours should keep,
And many a saw 'gainst drunkenness would preach:
Haply if potent gin had armed her tongue,
All on the reeling wight a thundering peal she rung.

VII.

For though the blooming queen of Cyprus' isle
O'er her cold bosom long had ceased to reign,
On that cold bosom still could Bacchus smile;
Such beverage to own if Bacchus deign:
Ne mickle wine she loved, for stronger drink
As med'cine oft a cholic pain will call,
And for the med'cine's sake might envy think,
Oft would a cholic-pain her bowels enthrall:
Yet much the proffer did she loath, and say,
No dram might maiden taste, and often answer'd nay.

VIII.

So, as in single animals he joyed,
One cat, and eke one dog, his bounty fed,
The first, the cat, devouring mice destroyed,
Thieves heard the last, and from his threshold fled.
All in the sun-beam basked the lazy cat,
Her mottled length in couchant posture laid;
On one accustomed chair while *Pompey* sat,
And loud he barked should puss his right invade.
The human pair oft marked them as they lay,
And haply sometimes thought, like cat and dog were they.

IX.

A room he had, that faced the southern ray,
Where oft he walked to set his thoughts in tune;
Pensive he paced its length an hour or tway,
All to the music of his creeking shoon:
And at the end a darkling closet stood,
Where books he kept, of old research and new,
In seemly order ranged on shelves of wood,
And rusty nails and phials not a few;
Thilk place a row of pegs beseemed well,
Of various vulgar use, unmeet for verse to tell.

X.

For still in form he placed his chief delight,
Nor lightly broke his old accustomed rule,
And much uncourteous would he hold the wight,
That e'er displaced a table, chair, or stool:
And oft in meet array their ranks he placed,
And oft with careful eye their ranks reviewed;
For novel forms, tho' much these forms had graced,
Himself and maiden minister eschewed.
One path he trode, nor ever would decline
A hair's unmeasured breadth from off the even line.

XI.

A club select there was, where various talk,
On various chapters, passed the lingering hour,
And thither oft he bent his evening walk,
And warmed to mirth by wine's enlivening power.
And oft on politics the preachments ran,
If a pipe lent its thought-begetting fume;
And oft important matters would they scan,
And, deep in council, fix a nation's doom;
And oft they chuckled loud at jest or jeer,
Or smutty tale the most, thilk much they loved to hear.

XII.

For men like him they were, of like consort,
Thilk much the honest Muse must needs condemn,
Who made of women's wiles their wanton sport,
And blessed their stars, that kept the curse from them.
Ne honest love they knew, ne meeting smile,
That shoots the transport to the throbbing heart!
Thilk knew they not, but in a harlot's guile,
Lascivious smiling through the mask of art;
And so of women deemed they, as they knew,
And from a demon's traits an angel's picture drew.

XIII.

But most abhorred they hymeneal rites,
And vaunted oft the freedom of their fate,
Nor vailed, as they opined, its best delights,
Those ills to balance, that on wedlock wait.
And often would they tell of hen-pecked fool,
Snubbed by the hard behest of sour-eyed dame,
And vowed no tongue-armed woman's freakish rule
Their mirth should quell, or damp their generous flame;
Then pledged their hands, and toss'd their bumpers o'er,
And Io! Bacchus! sung, and owned no other power.

XIV.

If e'er a doubt of softer kind arose
Within some breast of less obdurate frame,
Lo! where his hideous form a phantom shows,
Full in his view, and *Cuckold* is his name.
Him Scorn attended with a glance askew,
And scorpion Shame for delicts not his own,
Her painted bubbles while Suspicion blew,
And vexed the region round the Cupids' throne.
Far be from us, they cried, the treacherous bane,
Far be the dimply guile, and far the flowery chain!

THE

OLD MAID.

AFTER THE SAME MANNER.

I.

QUEEN of the starry train! whose silver ray
  Glads the dark bosom of the murky night!
Or if thou lov'st, remote from realms of day,
  In gloomy Tartarus to quench thy light,
Ycleped Proserpina! where Pluto reigns
  O'er damned ghosts, by sister-furies shent;
Or rather, Goddess of the woodland plains,
  That chear'st thy hounds with bow for ever bent!
Assist my verse: the virgin theme is thine;
Certes to virgin theme thou deignest to incline.

II.

And thou, O Goddess! whom, in days of yore,
Pledge of the monarch's unresisted love,
To hell's grim king the babbling echo bore,
Deep in the centre of her darkest grove,
Come, *Scandal!* come! with nod, with wink, or smile,
With half-heard whisper in the listening ear;
Come, round-encircled with thy cobweb-guile
Of friendly-seeming doubt, or seeming fear:
Lo! Hyson's talk-inspiring fume ascends!
Lo! to the grateful fume the well-pleas'd Goddess bends!

III.

Assist me thou! for certes thou hast seen,
When all excluded was the eye profane,
In gaping circle ranged when maidens been,
And each alternate tongue proclaim'd thy reign.
Of her I sing, who, next the sacred vase,
Poured to her friends the warm libation round;
And,—tell it, Scandal, to one maiden's praise,—
Her bard devoid of flattery was found:
No glozing tale, I ween, my verse bestows,
To glozing tale, I ween, tho' maids are seldom foes.

IV.

Tho' envious Time had drawn his lines of grey
Thro' the brown locks that o'er her forehead rose,
Yet moot it were, I wis, for me to say,
If miss or mistress were the stile she chose.
Ah me! how lose we days in Fancy's dream!
Besure in dulcet guise her years had past;
Scarce fifty seem'd they in the maiden's deem,
Yet sickerly the sixtieth was her last:
Nathless in secret wou'd she sigh and say,
Time been a subtle thief that steals our youth away!

V.

No gorgeous dress, I ween, she loved to wear,
Tho' whilom was her youth to shew inclin'd;
With former trappings, now her humbler care,
Her windows curtain'd, or her sofas lin'd
And boastful oft she shew'd the pattern rare,
Which erst her pencil for her needle drew,
Then glanc'd a censure on the modern fair,
Whose ill-spent moments no such labour knew,
Who pass'd the night at revel, rout, or play,
And doz'd the precious hours of chearful dawn away.

VI.

And oft, disdainful of the tinsel geer,
She mark'd, as well beseem'd, with honest rage,
What time her sister-censors sate to hear,
The gawdy trappings of the thoughtless age:
And much she blam'd the carriage vain and light,
The *tete* that towers aloft with borrow'd hair,
And O! profane! to catch the wanton sight,
The cross that dangles on the bosom bare:
Then told of better days, when kerchiefs clean,
And modest ruffs conceal'd what never man had seen.

VII.

Nor less the moral pravity she wail'd,
That spread infectious o'er the yielding times:
Where slept the law, where blinded justice fail'd,
And fashion sanctify'd her fav'rite crimes!
Alas to see! Religion's power was fled,
Vice walked in triumph o'er a guilty land!
Unblushing matrons stain'd the nuptial bed,
And frequent murther bar'd his purple hand!
And cooth was she, with fearful note I ween,
To mark the judging power that worketh all unseen.

VIII.

This is the cause, if right aredes the maid,
Why lags the spring from Winter's chilly rear,
And damp-winged Eurus, in his fogs arrayed,
Taints the young verdure of the genial year;
Nor now, as she was wont, the morn of May
Leads the soft zephyr o'er the dewy plain;
But summer suns emit a feebler ray,
And withering fogs usurp the Lion's reign.
Far other days her youthful sports had seen!
Far other yellow fields! far other meadows green!

IX.

And oft, as meeting flints engender flame,
Wisdom she sought in Reason's listed field;
Warm in her favourite cause, the fearless dame
Maintained the post of doubt, and scorned to yield.
Dian! by thee (if maiden powers above
Suggest resolve to maiden minds below)
Alike inspired in argument and love,
Her tongue pronounced the never-yielding No.
Nor would she grant, till Reason well should scan,
By woman aught opin'd, or aught opin'd by man.

X.

Not like the wight, in Dido's festive hall,
Clepy'd Æneas, when the tale of woe
Rehearsing direful deeds, and *Troia's* fall,
Perforce constrained the briny tear to flow;
This patient maid, as certes seemeth meet,
From pains agone a present pleasure drew;
And oft right quaintly would the tale repeat
To other wights, who ne'er that pleasure knew,
Of stitch, or cramp, or tooth-ache's burning pain,
Of night-mare murdering sleep, or corns foreboding rain.

XI.

Yet much the while I laud her honest skill,
She shewed the poison, and the cure she gave;
So, have I heard, the venomed serpents kill,
Whose heads afford the precious stone to save.
For much of healing herbs the maiden knew,
And culled her simples for their balmy juice,
From plains, where all unnoticed else they grew,
And pined unconscious of a nobler use.
Her books of cookery taught the healing lore
To cure the countless ills their sauces caused before.

XII.

Ne yet to her the herald's art unknown,
Tho' all unconned the shield-emblazoned page;
Ne better traced their own sepulchral stone,
The ancestry of many a former age;
And soothly would she mark the rightful line
That held of ancient names the chiefest place,
And where the branches part, and where they join,
With felice art, I ween, the dame would trace;
And oft her proper kindred would explore,
And many a cousin hailed, that knew his tribe no more.

XIII.

Tho' ne'er from her embrace had children sprung,
Yet alien imps with kindness would she greet,
And oft with pleasure heard the lisping tongue,
And gave the promised meed of candied sweet;
And oft the tale of wonderment she told,
Of Fayes, that gambled o'er the circly ground,
And birds, that taught the moral lore of old,
Then strewed the snowy comfits all around;
Thilk would she see them glean with looks of grace,
And stroked the flaxen pole, and blessed the smiling face!

XIV.

A favourite parrot was she wont to tend,
More blessed than aught created male beside;
And oft he perched upon her lily-hand,
And kissed the lips, to man, alas! denied;
And oft his prattle would she teach the bird,
He sloped his glossy neck, and seemed to hear;
But, ah! the while from passing boys he heard
The phrase unseemly for a maiden's ear:
Shame on the filthy rogue! the maiden cried;
Shame on the filthy rogue! the mimic bird replied.

XV.

Woe to the maid! a maid, alas! no more,
Who passed the line untainted virtue draws.
Thee, sacred Virtue! did the dame adore,
The watchful guardian of thy strictest laws!
Certes no pity thrilled her bosom pure,
(Or justice bade that pity to forego,)
For her whom Pleasure's syren strains allure,
To drink the poisoned cup of shame and woe.
And all too light she held that woe and shame,
And called her many a wretch, and many a worser name.

XVI.

And well I ween, right critique was the dame,
To note defect in beauty's purest grace,
Nor could the age produce a boasted name
That 'scaped remark on person or on face:
Yet, sooth to say, her praise with better will
Forerun the harsh decree her justice gave;
What pity 'twere one little word should kill,
When half her sentence meant before to save!
Close in the rear the envious *but* appeared,
And blasted all the sweets her milder breath had reared.

XVII.

And fondly oft the tale of youth recalled
(Nor much of past delights her memory lost,)
Of hearts that whilom had her eyes enthralled;—
Relentless she, of cruelty to boast!
And shewed on gilded leaves impassioned rhymes,
(To love I wis the Muse was ever kind,)
Thilk would the love-sick youths of former times
Sigh to the sighing of the summer's wind!
And all, forsooth, they told, the piteous gale
Ceased at the sound to blow, and Echo learnt the tale.

XVIII.

Then would their fancies o'er the garden stray,
And mark the tints of every flower that blows,
Compared with her, if soothly marked the lay,
The lily lost its white, its blush the rose.
Then would they tell of Cupid's killing dart,
That glanced, O treacherous softness! from her eyes,
And paint the pang that tears the bleeding heart,
When Chloe frowns, alas! and Damon dies.
But now of Chloe's frowns no bards complain;
Certes from known repulse they ceased the bootless strain!

XIX.

Ah! glosing bards, ye paint the rose's hue,
The blooming lily with the rose ye twine;—
Ne'er did your smooth-set sonnets warble too
That lilies wither, and that roses pine!
My honest verse, (ye gentle virgins, hear,
O'er your smooth cheeks when Hebe's dimples play,)
Though fearful, whispers in the youthful ear,
That kingdoms, states, and—dimples—must decay!
Ah! thoughtless youth the harsher truth denies,
Nor beauty mortal thinks, alas! till beauty dies.

THE

VISION OF VANITY.

ADDRESSED TO A LADY.

The principal ideas and characters sketched out in the following Poem, were enlarged, and somewhat more connected, in another, first published in 1771, but written several years before, intituled, *The Pursuits of Happiness.—Vid. postea.*

SOME power there is above the vulgar reach,
Which art may tutor, but can never teach;
Some subtler essence of the thinking mind,
That leaves the lagging pace of sense behind;
That taught a Shakespeare all his magic fire;
That Gray exalted o'er the melting lyre;

With Dryden wandered thro' the Aonian bowers,
And culled the fragrance of their sweetest flowers;
That gave the pointed line of Pope to glow;
That frets and kicks at straws with poor Rousseau;
That taught a Collins' raptured eye to gaze
Full on her fires, and drink their fiercest blaze;
Pours from a Mason's harp the flowing lay;
With Shenstone piped, and roves with pensive Gray;
To mirth, to sorrow, or to madness free;
Laughs with a Sterne, and sometimes yawns with me.
Struck by her wand, as late entranced I lay,
And thought, or seemed to think, the hour away,
Lo! to my view a beauteous form appeared;
A female form her soft enchantment reared.
On quivering gossamer * her steps were placed,
A shining baldric girt her slender waist,
Where light embroidery's glittering texture shewed,
What on her favourite sons her smile betowed;
The patriot's coronet, the courtier's rod,
And mitres for the humbler men of God.
Redundant flowed her purple robe behind,
And, loosely waving, wooed the wanton wind;

* A lover may bestride the gossamer,
That idles in the wanton summer air,
And yet not fall, so light is vanity.
Romeo and Juliet.

O'er her soft cheeks the dimples held their reign,
And speaking pulses throbbed in every vein;
Fantastic trinkets decked her plaited hair,
The heaving whiteness of her bosom, bare!
She stroked her eye-brows, and she tossed her head,
And smoothed her lips to wear a brighter red;
Then, with a conscious smile, she threw askance
The self-complaisance of a meaning glance.

"Mortal!" she said, "at Folly's gilded shrine,
If e'er a shaft from Satire's bow was thine,
Behold the Power, who gave her strength to rise,
And point her lazy pinions to the skies.
In darkling chaos and primeval shade,
Unmoved, unprincipled, was Folly laid,
Till thwart the gloom I beamed a pitying ray,
And bade her flaunt it in the face of day;
Grin where she gaped, in self-opinion strong,
And ever confident of right in wrong.

"Look o'er the deeds, which Truth or Fancy give,
In verse, in statue, or in paint, to live;
Reared by my hand, the storied actions spring,
And, but for me, what wretch would be a king?
For me the hero wheels his smoking car,
Amidst the purple ranks of fiery war,
Then struts a god! and mouths my better name,
Ambition, or the sacred thirst of fame.

For me, the coward death itself defies,
And conscious ——— like a Cato dies.
" But these are draughts in nature seldom shewn;
They paint 'em oftenest, who have never known.
Search common life, and search it where you will,
'Tis Vanity impels the action still.
Still some gay nothings some gay nothings meet,
To feed the airy form of self-conceit.
" I gave my lord,—the solace of his life,—
His handsome snuff-box, and his handsome wife.
Alike the reason, they adorn the great,
For both were purchased at a monstrous rate.
" For me Papilio culls his insect breeds,
Ranges his butterflies, his maggots feeds;
Now points his tube to Venus' radiant height;
Now ogles through his microscope—a mite.
" Go thou, to life in larger views inclined,
And mark the buzzing insects of mankind;
See sweet Sir Lappet, with the busiest face,
Perform in papillots his morning race,
From scented toilet to a china sale;
To swallow half, and half regorge a tale.
Deep in the secrets of the state-machine;
And as important on " an Indian screen;"
The things, like thoughts, that jostle in his brain,
Rise into scraps, and then dissolve again.

" Why, hark'ee, Frank; last night—but mum for
that—
You cou'd not keep it."—and he smooths his hat.—
" My letters say, Sir John, that there's a talk"—
(And shews a brilliant on a hand of chalk.)
" The queen of Denmark—there's a figured bowl—
The Marquis writes me, that the Tuesday's poll—
What gewgaw things—your glass, my lord—are
these?
O, execrably vulgar! not Chinese!"
" Shut with a cautious hand Pisanio's door,
And, trembling, venture on his polished floor;
Touch but his bells, so tremulously hung,
A cricket presses, and his bells are rung.
Reflective tables tables shew again;
And muffled lacqueys lift the shining plain.
Pale in his face his friend that terror views;
His friend had almost failed—to wipe his shoes.
" I tempted Labeo, who of old could tell
But just how much brocade was worth the ell,
His hard-earned riches in his age to waste,—
Delusive chace! to hunt the Proteus—Taste.
O'er the broad lawn behold a Dian reign,
To meet yon visto from the neighbouring plain;
Here crawls a puddle from its scanty fount;
Here nods a ruin on a new-raised mount;

There stinking shrubs, from Indian plains conveyed,
To pine and wither in the torpid shade;
While Labeo's gardener plants him into fame,
Proud of the beauties which he cannot name.
Him all the wondering cits, who range at will
On sunny Sabbath-days from Ludgate Hill,
Mimic in little through their spruce abodes,
And rifle Hyde-Park-Corner of its gods.

"Even the dull wretch, with girdle-fettered paunch,
Who sweats at turtle, or who pants at haunch,
Of feelings frugal, just content with one,
The grossest pleasure of the brute called Man,
Inspired by me, surveys the table round,
And boasts of beating Helluo by a pound.

"O'er the soft sex acknowledged power I boast;
They feel it oftenest, and enjoy it most.
By partial art at least to man belong
The reason-fathomed deeps of right and wrong;
By me the cob-web principles are wrought,
That float and waver in a woman's thought.
Robed in my tints the fleeting objects viewed,
But half they reason, and but half conclude;
From this to that the fond ideas range,
Warm to enjoy, but only blest in change.
Untasted banquets pall on their desire,
And rising wishes bid resolve expire;

But still, where'er the wanderer's steps incline,
In various shapes the sovereign rule is mine;
I weave the texture of her gaudiest dream,
Herself the motive, and herself the theme.
True to that shrine she bends the suppliant knee,
And sometimes kneels to God—to worship me!

"In Phryne's mirror Phryne's self is fair,
Tricked in the charms my pencil pictures there;
And Sylvia thinks, while you in blushes sit,
The lovely ideot is a perfect wit.

"Nor yet, by all the graces formed in vain,
Nor yet Monimia 'scaped my powerful reign.
With all that nature gives, refined by art,
With all the feelings of the generous heart,
The gay to ravish, and the grave to please;
By wisdom tutored in the school of ease.
Of parts possessed, by heaven assigned to few,
She pitied follies which she never knew;
Slow to condemn, condemned without a frown,
And censure taught a language not its own.

"A youth who loved, (of such himself possessed,
The kindred virtues of Monimia's breast,
His honest passion told the beauteous maid,
By the soft feelings of her soul betrayed;
A conscious blush with virgin coyness strove,
And colder reason urged the cause of love.

In vain she urged; indignant I arose,
(For I and merit commonly are foes,)
Odious, I whispered, plain Eugenio's wife!—
She sighed, and took a titled fool for life.
" For me, Blondella talks the live-long night,
Of moral fitness, and the rule of right;
Then all for Plato's philosophic mind,
The pure idea, and the love refined!
The delicate, the sympathy of soul!
And nameless somethings, that on nothing roll!
With what a dying dying fall she speaks,
And leans on two plump arms two purple cheeks.
For not o'er nature Plato's rules prevail,
To teach Blondella Plato's pensive pale;
Nay some there are, as o'er their favourite tea
They sacrifice to scandal and to me,
Who say, Blondella feels the common flames,
And loves as solidly as other dames.
And yet (for Pope informed me long ago,
What can we reason but from what we know,)
Perhaps they err; for them no sacred fire
Did ere the breath of sapient Greece inspire;
And from plain nature, plainly understood,
They cannot think so ill of flesh and blood.
" Not quite of Epicure's or Plato's school,
Not quite a wit, and just not quite a fool;

With pause, and point, and epithet to aid,
Daphne for me invokes the tuneful maid.
With rhyme from Byshe, and sentiment from Behn,
In deepest pathos Daphne dips her pen;
To weeping rills her sighing shepherds wail,
And sighs are wafted on the sighing gale;
Smooth flows her stream, and soft her zephyr blows,
With ah's how tender, and how solemn oh's!
Then toils a novelist in virtue's cause,
And joins example to the moral laws;
Virtue and vice their proper meed assigns,
And awful justice speaks her closing lines.
The maze of sentiment and sorrow past,
Each honest girl a husband finds at last;
And vice, her long career of mischief run,
Is doomed to penance in a sober nun.
Yet, ah! the while, insidious powers of love!
Was Daphne tangled in the web she wove:
She feels and paints the soft desire by turns,
And midst the flame her fancy kindled burns;
More blessed than Waller,* reaped both love and bays,
And lost her virtue—while she wrote its praise.

* "I grasped at love, and filled my hand with bays."
WALLER of himself.

Nor yet where all thy boasted reason runs,
Thy boasted reason shields her thinking sons.
I guide the stoic through the moral page;
I give the clue that leads the poring sage;
His book the scholar, or his studies faint;
And, strange! humility itself the saint:
Mine swells the period from a Johnson's hand;
And famished poets at my altars stand.

"Even thou by me inspired, without the nine,
To try at verse, and pour the feeble line,
Thou own'st my power; amid the smiling train,
Of wealth, of person, or of title vain,
I mark thy bosom swell with secret pride,
To scorn their weakness, to thy scorn allied.

"Though yet thou darest not wide expand thy sail,
Nor trust the public for a partial gale;
Though ne'er, by earnest friends or me impelled,
Thy flippant verse a miscellany held;
Nor scrawled a-top by some unwilling lord,
To court subscription, hangs thy begging board;
There are whose praise indulgent swells thy heart,
And speeds the poison from my rankling dart:
Lo! she, of whom are all the virtues vain,
Too dangerous Goodness! she approves thy strain,
And drawn half smiling, bids thee write again."—

She spoke; my bosom felt the magic sound,
My active spirits danced a nimbler round.
Propitious power!—I prayed, or meant a prayer;
Her light form faded in the empty air.
Yet these she left, and bade to you belong:
I own her power, if you approve the song.

INTRODUCTION

TO

THE FATAL SISTERS,

AN ODE, BY MR GRAY.

This Introduction was written at the desire of a friend, who observed, that the description of the appearance of those divinities (whose song Mr Gray has given in the above-mentioned Ode,) was very susceptible of sublime and terrible images. The supposed place of their appearance was impressed on my imagination, from having visited it not long before these stanzas were written.

'Twas in Eirins' fatal day,
Led by Woden's secret hand,
Where the dancing waves of Mey*
Speed the current to the land.

* The name of a place on the northern coast of Caithness, opposite to Orkney. The epithet of dancing, applied to the

Red his eye, that watched the book,
Sealed with many a hero's blood,
With bristling locks, and haggard look,
The hoary prophet gazed the flood.

The biting north wind brushed the tide
And drove the bickering hail before;
Shrill the angry mermaid cried,
Amidst the bursting billows' roar.

From Stroma's black and ragged brow,
Hark to the raven's boding note!
While, 'midst the heaving waves below,
The shattered masts of shipwreck float.

Big the cloud, on Thules' height,
Sailed athwart the dusky sky,
And, swelling to the distant sight,
Far its wreaths were seen to lie.

waves, will seem more proper, when it is known, that by the meeting of certain currents, they are thrown up on that shore, in a perpendicular direction; and are there termed, from their appearance, or height perhaps, "The Men of Mey."

Where the stifled tempests pant,
A hollow sound the caverns gave,
And forky lightnings shot aslant
The glittering tresses of the wave.

Lo! the muttering thunder rolled,
A meteor's streamy sign was given!
Purple lids, attinged with gold,
Op'd the azure-eye of heaven!

Now, from out the darker side,
Louder thunders strike his ear;
Now, from out the beamy void,
Lo! the giant maids appear!—

"Fatal Sisters! speed your way,
Give your foamy coursers rein;
Pass the dancing waves of Mey,
Pass the murmur of the main.

"See the leader of the band,
Dreaded Hilda! where she past;
See the trumpet in her hand!
Hark! she pours the rattling blast.

" Fell Revenge and Fury spread
Their burning pinions o'er her brow;
Her eyes, that panic-terrors shed,
Fiercely shoot a crimson glow.

" Round, in mazy circlets, scream
The famished birds, that watch the dead.
See a fading spectre gleam!
Sygurd * droops his fated head.

" Where to meet the pebbly shore
Leans the velvet-verdured hill,
Darts the spear the maiden bore,
Mandate of the maiden's will:

" Lo! it lightned, as it flew!
Quivering now on earth it stands.
Now again the blast she blew;
Echoing shook a thousand lands!

* Sygurd, Earl of Orkney, killed in an expedition to Ireland. *Vide* Notes on Mr Gray's Poem.

" Labouring with its fateful birth,
Heaved the hill on every side:
Lo! the portals of the earth,
Bursting, yawned an entrance wide!

" See the loom is ready laid,
O'er it see the sisters bent;
Seats, that bear each wondrous maid,
Each the rock an earthquake rent.

" Hark! beneath the trembling ground,
(From Hela's * dark domain it rose,)
Deeply pealed a solemn sound!—
Hark! for Hilda catched the close!"—

' Ours,' she cried, and waved her hand,
' Ours, to join the magic throng;
Sisters! such our queen's command,
Ours to swell the magic song.

' Now the storm begins to low'r,' &c.
(as in Mr Gray's Ode

* Hela, in the Gothic mythology, is the goddess of Death.

THE

PURSUITS OF HAPPINESS.

INSCRIBED TO A FRIEND.

YES, by the phrase of schoolmen unconfined,
To trace some striking features of the mind;
Some wandering lines, that mark the rising thought,
Ne'er in the depths of tangled study sought,
These may be mine; below the critic's view
To sport with verse, and trust for praise to you.
O'er every beating heart confessed to reign,
Pursued by all, by all pursued in vain,
The sage's secret, and the poet's dream,
Be the wide wish of HAPPINESS my theme.
Come, then, and let us lecture by the hour
On these great subjects, Wisdom, Wealth, and Power,

The boasted source of every bliss deny,
And shew their empty urns, their fountains dry.
Alas! from me no learned lectures hope,
A simple rhymester—look for these in Pope.
I boast no magic verse, no matchless mind,
That deep in science leaves the crowd behind,
To ****** leave a system's pert pretence,
Nor, where I cannot fathom, take offence;
Some passing figures only dare to show,
And give the Muse's comment as they go.
All, said the Dane,† have business and desires;
All human kind this touch Promethean fires,
By every rank, by every temper sought,
Something to be, and something to be thought:
This on the many's changing will depends,
That on our own, uncertain of its ends;
To that our tastes affix no certain name,
This roves through all the lengthened scale of fame.
'Tis Vapid's bow, his minuet, his walk,
His smiles, that simmer into gentle talk,
Fashion in youth, and decency in age;
With prudes 'tis honour, prayer-book, and page.
Some fleeting hope we start, pursue, and miss,
Then rouse another, and pronounce it bliss.

† Hamlet.

Yet may not spleen the sovereign will arraign,
Yet may not spleen believe we run in vain.
'Tis the pursuit rewards the active mind,
And what in rest we seek, in toil we find.
The friend of Pyrrhus bade him feast and live,
Possessed of all the finished war could give.
Vain were his banquets, had not Pyrrhus fought;
The chace, and not the quarry, Pyrrhus sought.
'Midst all the sweets of Tempe's roseate vale,
Where every fragrance breathes on every gale,
The fabled pleasures of Elysian bowers,
The nectar quaffed on beds of blushing flowers,
Give all to sense, that sense could wish to prove,
And give immortal, as the joys of Jove,
The soul would sicken 'mid the stagnate air,
And wish the ruffian blasts of human care.
Where passive sense, with all her powers, would miss,
The springs of action move the wheels of bliss.
Hence, bustling natures, in a wayward state,
And thrown at random on the coil of fate,
Staunch to each purpose, still unwearied press
Where dark misfortune low'rs, or beams success,
Teach every curse the happiness it brings,
And reap the vintage 'midst the wild of things:

Hence Balbus triumphs o'er the ills of life,
With duns, bad debtors, law-suits, and a wife.
Hence vain the rule that moral coldness gives,
And bids Lothario live as Probus lives.
"I sit," says Probus, "on the peaceful shore,
And hear the billows round me idly roar;
I hear unmoved. Within my humble cell
The blissful powers of calm contentment dwell.
Soft as the sleep of babes my passions lie."—
Lothario yawns, and Probus wonders why—
Lothario, swelling with a soul of fire,
Winged with the lightning wish, the fierce desire.
"Contentment, peace, the blissful scenes of ease!
The hell your fancies paint were heaven to these."
If certain bounds the impulsive ardour kept,
Nor maddened joy, nor melancholy wept,
But where, amid the intricate of fate,
Our reason gave to love, and gave to hate;
Were the true blissful always understood,
And sought alone amidst the wise and good,
Sunk in the calm would Virtue's labour cease,
And lose her triumphs in the lap of peace;
The pulse of active life would cease to beat,
No wish to agitate, no hope to heat,
Unnerved each effort, every power unbent,
Lulled in one listless apathy, Content.

Men must have passions; point them, if you can,
Where less the brute enjoys, and more the man.
To combat passion when our reasons rise,
Reasons are better passions in disguise.
In every climate, and in every age,
With poet, priest, philosopher, and sage;
Let pedant preachers smooth it as they will,
They preach successful to the passions still;
Direct the wish to rise, the tear to fall,
Give fear to some, and vanity to all.

The world's dull reason, sober, cool, and pure,
The world's dull reason is a knave demure.
See, fresh from Nature's hand, unfettered youth
Romantic friendship boast, romantic truth;
With all the mist of fond delusion blind,
The venial errors of an honest mind,
High beat their hearts with every generous aim,
And grasp the golden hope of endless fame:
Majestic visions, forms of transport wild,
Where bloomed the arts, or hardy valour toiled,
Rise from the pictured walks of Greece or Rome,
Rise from the past, and point the time to come.
But soon, too soon, the airy fabrics fall,
And servile Reason lacqueys Interest's call;
Now Caution creeps where Virtue stalked before,
And cons the battered page of Prudence o'er.

Get wealth, the bell of every idiot chimes,
Immoderate wealth, the madness of the times;
Get wealth abroad, beneath the furthest sky,
Or cheat at home, game, perjure, fawn, and lie.
See, at the goal, to tempt the kindling race,
See Stukely's laurels blooming in thy face!
Stukely, whose youth the weakness was denied
To hide the villain, or desire to hide;
(Though in his face, at times, the fiend within
Half veils his portrait with a bastard grin,)
Plays with my Lord, is favoured by her Grace,
Now grasps a title, and obtains a place,
Drinks precious burgundy, is served in plate,
And winds their schemes with ministers of state;
Nay, shame to virtue in a woman's shape!
Aspasia is his wife—without a rape.—
All this is owned; but prudent men are glad
To take mankind as mankind may be had:
Stukely has parts; has gained, from nothing, clear
(Or fame has lied) eight thousand pounds a year.
"His virtue!" cries a sage, "my good young man,
Leave rhyming, and get money, if you can;
For Stukely's worth and yours, the world will scan 'em,
Trust me they will, at just so much per annum."

The blushless sons of these degenerate days,
Not virtue scorn alone, but virtue's praise.
Yet not the suffrage of the world bestows
The bliss our vices chase, our virtue knows;
The glare, that blazes in a public show,
The courtier's whisper, and the great man's bow;
To dance with princes, and to dine with lords,
These are the joys their envied lot affords.
Yet they, whom gaping crowds with envy see,
Have years to seem, but scarce an hour to be;
Set, like some bauble gayly trimmed, on high,
Their life, their friendship, and their love, a lie.
If e'er reflection renders up its trust,
The vapid medley rises in disgust,
Without the sparkle, and the gold, remain
The sparkling poison, and the gilded chain;
And memory gathers, with unwearied wing,
But thoughts that torture, and but joys that sting.
But far more solid joys may wealth produce,
With those who spend it not for show, but use;
Its decent sober sons, who calmly taste
What riches give, without intemperate waste.
Thus honest Balaam—yes, the title's meet,
No rich man is a rogue in Lombard-street—
"What! honest? he, whom orphan minors curse,
Robbed of their rights to pamper Balaam's purse;

A suit in chancery shall set you right"—
A knave! I scorn the word—the man's a knight;
His honour's proof I draw from high records,
True, as his turtle, in the mouth of lords.
"To lords a bubble, and to wits a sport,
A man of moment (as he says) at court"—
"There, while I breathed a prayer for Britain's good,
The best of princes marked me where I stood,
My absence from the last day's levee chid,
And asked, How Lady Balaam's toothach did?"
Our friends may fail us, and our fortunes fall,
Self-consequence alone is true to all:
Search where you will, the dullest herd explore,
Where muddy nature seems to roll no more,
Who calmly bear, in business' hackneyed ways,
The listless habitude of passive days,
Who breathe an air, that feels no active spring,
Unfanned by Fancy's ever-vivid wing,
Guiltless of thought, who creep their round of time,
Like some old orloge, with one drowsy chime,
And 'mongst their whiter notes of memory keep
One better dinner, and one sounder sleep,—
Yet there has pride its little objects too,
The wig best powdered, or the blackest shoe;

Hence chandler Gripe his wife's shrill tongue belabours,
For Sukey's flounce is narrower than her neighbour's;
Hence Pastry Figg, who claims superior parts,
Steals half the paper-bottom from his tarts,
And dares the boldest of his Friday's club
With doubts deistical from Father Chubb.
To self-conceit the meanest knowledge swells;
Of Lælio's motions Lælio's butler tells,
The last supply can figure to a sous,
And counts the patriot noses of the house.
Proud of his post his Grace's footman see,
As pert, as wicked, and as drunk, as he,
With shoes as shining, with as broad a lace,
With all his idiot sauciness of face.
The boy, whose bawling merit boasts to sweep
The greasy crossings of the ward of Cheap,
Who scrapes for farthings plump Sir Pipkin's door,
For trade and freedom swells the city roar.
Through all her ranks the law's importance runs,
And Mansfield's words are mouthed by scriveners' sons.
With eyes that keep one vacant point in view,
Like pap the sun had bleached and hardened too,
That took some odd fantastic form by chance,
See milky Lamio, mute and grave advance:

O'er locks that nature gave, but solemn law,
A foe to nature, with aversion saw,
A needless peruke's snowy round is thrown,
And blanks his face with folly not its own.
His words, in one long even tone that drawl,
When drowsy Dulness yawns her opiate call,
Let Pity suffer (for she can no more)
To mark the weather, or to count the hour;
But should the youth, amid the circling pit,
Decide on Shakespeare, and pronounce on wit,
We laugh in scorn—yet Lamio still is blessed;
He thinks, poor soul! the rogues have found his jest.

Some few there are, who by impartial rules
Half find the secret that themselves are fools,
Who, never deep in thought, nor mazed in doubt,
Can laugh at wisdom, and are blessed without;
Who beat, unmoved, the beaten track, to find
Each grosser sense, that mocks the reasoning mind;
Hunt in a squire, an alderman regale,
Or swill, a parson, politics, and ale.
Others by Dulness' brisker efforts made,
(For there are fools of feather, as of lead)
Are borne by pride beyond their native fence,
And cheat mankind, the hypocrites of sense.

The soft, the delicate Favonius hear
Jingling his baubles in my aching ear,
So dully sweet, so pertly debonnair,
Wit with a grin, and wisdom with a stare;
Blessed youth! whose skin so white, whose talk so smart,
Wins every male, and every female, heart.
With tags of jests in Brown and Durfey found,
With puns that lie in ambush for a sound,
With mottos from the wits of ancient days,
Stolen from the tops of magazine-essays,
With painters' names at print-shops daily sought,
With one poor epigram his tutor wrote,
Favonius rose, and all the ladies know it,
A wit, a scholar, connoisseur, and poet;
Or, if these titles should not please his ear,
Give him his own—Favonius is a peer.*
"Friendship's the wine of life." I hold at least
Folly the nuts and apples of the feast.
That flippant folly, with the jaunty mien,
At midnight balls in Florio's figure seen;
Skilled in those little arts that always please,
With pertness fluttering on the wings of ease,

* This couplet is restored from the original copy.

He wears a smile perpetual in his face,
And talks perpetual nothings with a grace;
Or, when his stars are in a blessing fit,
Plays with a fan, and stumbles upon wit,—
Something by fops called wit, that fools may find,
No words describe, for no ideas bind;
That, far from sense, with whim's exotics grew,
That much applauds itself, and laughs at you.

Not Priscus thus; he boasts an honest heart,
An open soul, that hates the name of art;
With sense unpolished grating on his mind,
He holds perpetual war with human kind,
Storms at a fop, is angry at a fool,
And bears good-nature just within a rule.
Where tyrant Priscus scowls his reddening eye,
Mirth waves his wing, and all the Cupids fly:
On him what joys of other names await,
Blessed with a foe, and proud to purchase hate.
Is this to truth, to wisdom this allied?
All this is nature, or perhaps 'tis pride.

We seldom simply judge of good or ill
By genuine laws, or unperverted will;
The means of bliss with you, with me, or him,
Are fixed by narrow codes of partial whim.

But in one passion (sings the bard of night,*
Nor sings he false) all human hearts unite;
If from their fonds their motives you unbind,
Destructive vanity rules all mankind.

And rules in love, my Florio? ask your Chloe,
Your last year's charmer, she perhaps may show ye;
Her Florio once, her Florio to the heart
Pierced, and transpierced, by Cupid's golden dart,
With many a stolen sonnet to her praise,
"And many a window scratched with amorous lays."
But now your Chloe is so changed a creature,
These sonnets are the falsest things in nature.
By what sad chance are all her beauties lost?
She's quite as handsome—but no more a toast;
Some newer beauty caught the public eye,
And Florio took the hint—to gaze and die.

Alas! so tame our modern love is grown,
That dying lovers die in rhyme alone;
Harmless its fires, like playhouse lightnings, glare,
And each impassioned votary's but a player.

When from the yoke of Afric's tawny son
His half-unpeopled land the Spaniard won,

* Young.

When midst the lonely castle's echoing hall,
The Giant-Cuisses decked the ragged wall,
And dark Enchantment, Superstition's child,
In midnight mazes walked the howling wild;
Romance, with all her fancy-fashioned creed,
Saw heroes pine, and desperate lovers bleed,
Through circling years, the virgin flame confessed,
And blazing fiercest when by Fate repressed;
The poisoned chalice, and the dagger bare,
She taught the tender-bosomed nymph to dare;
With magic hand untwined the threads she wove,
And poured on virtue all the bliss of love.

But when, her canvas opening to the wind,
Had Traffic wafted wealth from either Ind,
Attendant Luxury she wafted too,
Refinement flourished, and Politeness grew;
Then Love was listed in her mimic train,
And Fashion's lip his ardours taught to feign;
Debauched by art, he lost his genuine power,
And idly frolicked midst the vacant hour.

"'Tis woman's fault," the surly Priscus says,
Degenerate woman in these waning days;
True to no worth, in female bosoms reign,
Despite of love, the fickle and the vain;

Still idly soaring, with untaught desire,
Squire yields to lord, and merit to a squire."
'Tis *their* ambition; lords are noble game,
And mighty minds at mighty quarries aim:
Though tyrant man would fain monopolize
The thirst of glory and of great emprize,
Yet female breasts the generous ardour own,
Their sceptre beauty, and our hearts their throne.
Her soul unbroken, and unquenched its flame,
See yonder veteran in the lists of fame;
See, at the closing of some public show
Canidia, jostling in its hindmost row:
('Tis but the decent rudeness of her state,
For simple ladies come an hour too late,)
Canidia, still in beauty's *second* prime,
At sixty bends not to the hand of Time;
Time can but draw his wrinkles o'er her brow,
Time can but spread her glossy locks with snow,
These are no parts of her—that head-dress see,
Triumphs in youthful Immortality!
Eternal bloom—is in the power of paint,
And yet Canidia's more than half a saint;
Constant at church, for sometimes beaux are there,
And thus, one fasting morn, she closed a prayer:—
"And as for death, since die the youngest must,
And this fair frame be mouldered in the dust,

Be all these errors of my youth forgiven,
And let me wear this Denmark-fly* in heaven!"
But vapid now, like fruit preserved by art,
Canidia's youth is harmless to my heart;
But seek its power, its native empire seek,
Where the blood dances in Flavilla's cheek,
Glows in her lip, her panting bosom warms,
And swells redundant in a thousand charms.
Her winged thoughts, from torpid reason flown,
Flit in a sunny region of their own:
Wisdom forgets to chide, when Wisdom spies
The dear imprudence sparkling in her eyes;
Her eyes, that in their beamy courses roll
Luxuriant feelings, and a waste of soul:
Yet would he speak, not reason's musty saw,
Would give thy pleasure, not thy conduct, law;
For pleasure's self, too headlong in the chace,
Flavilla stifles with a rude embrace;
From life's gay bustle panting and distressed,
And still more feverish in the lap of rest,
Pursues the bubble where it glanced before,
The bursting bubble glances now no more;
For know, Flavilla, though it sounds but ill,
That even in folly, sense is something still.

* A particular kind of head-dress.

Grown sick of life, a wistful thought I cast
Where thought had scarce begun to guide the past;
Where truth sat brooding, like a white-plumed dove,
O'er infant friendship, and o'er infant love;
The fairy tale by simple nurses told,
And memory rushing in the songs of old.
One hallowed satchel still recals the boy,
The hallowed satchel draws a tear of joy!
Oh, golden days! that ne'er return again,
When life's full current ran without a stain;
Warm from the heart each pointed wish was led,
Without the cold conclusions of the head.
Some little cares, that fluttered as they rose,
Just sunk again to sweeten new repose;
No tangled knowledge did the soul endure,
And this was wisdom, for the soul was pure.
Nor yet, for all the powers of boastful art,
Each deeper science, each sublimer part,
Did pride allow me, would I barter this,
The meek-eyed virtue, with her peaceful bliss.
Cease then to chace the meteor as it flies,
Be humbly happy, and be humbly wise.
To know what nature meant, what heaven allowed,
Too great for vice, too little to be proud,
With mirth to chear, with temper ne'er forgot,
This may be ours—'twas Lentulus's lot.

Born in that middle state, which gives to know
What greatness is, what greatness can't bestow;
With moderate wishes, but no cares that vex;
With knowledge just to guide, but not perplex;
That ne'er at truth's plain dictates took offence;
That ne'er in subtilty was lost to sense;
With taste, that knew the pleasing path to strike,
Without the nice discernment of dislike;
Warm from his heart though virtue's zeal arose,
Compassion checked the flame, and spared her foes,
With pious awe her jealous sense suppressed,
And took the worst of seemings at the best;
Even for the worst a brother's yearnings kept,
And where his faith condemned, his nature wept.

Free from her proudest good, her direst harm,
He fled from fortune to an humble farm;
There shunned the crowd his virtue ne'er approved;
There saw the better few his virtue loved.

Oh, let me oft the blissful scene recal,
(While proud ambition's plumy visions fall,)
His barn when autumn's yellow bounty stored,
The modern patriarch o'er his festive board!
His festive board, which modest nature graced,
Nor tortured appetite, and called it Taste;
Where towered no plate, no saucy lacqueys frowned,
But rosy children satlike cherubs round:

[illegible] the child,
[illegible] smiled;
[illegible] bowl,
[illegible] soul;
[illegible] lies,
[illegible]

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible]—the mouldering
[illegible]
No marble covers, but a simple sod:
Near where its sheltering arms the ancient yew
Leans to the [illegible], and droops the [illegible]
There on the [illegible] I saw them rest his bier,
(By faith forbidden, [illegible])
Some sons of virtue, now themselves forgot,
Walked, with a pausing step, the silent spot;
On heaven their eyes they cast, their hopes relied,
Father, thy will be done!—they said, and sighed.

Oh, that my verse a memory could give
To live for ages, that so pure could live!

Proud to attend on virtue's train alone,
Mark his untainted life,—and mend my own.
Then should no sigh my wounded bosom tear
For aught that fortune's glittering sons may wear;
But reason teach me, that we idly roam
For bliss abroad, which she can find at home.
Placed where no spark of genius dares to rise,
Where dulness scarce unfolds her leaden eyes,
With all th' inextricable maze around,
Of Gothic jargon, and unmeaning sound,
Virtue may teach to feel but half the chain,
And strew her roses o'er the barren plain.
Blessed, if no crime its shameful wages bring,
Nor wealth be wafted on dishonour's wing;
Gay where I can, nor always loving mirth,
Not Fancy's quite, nor quite a son of Earth;
May I, what wisdom can, what weakness should,
Harmless at least, attempt a little good;
And, calmly noting where the pageants end,
Smile at the great, and venerate my friend.

EPILOGUE

TO

THE TRAGEDY OF TAMERLANE.

ACTED BY CHILDREN, 1772.

It may not be unamusing for the principal actors in this Tragedy (brought out as an exercise for declamation to the young pupils of Mrs Baker, a celebrated actress and teacher of reading in Edinburgh, at a little occasional theatre in the house of the then Lord President Dundas,) to recollect the objects of their ambition then, compared with their situations now. The part of *Tamerlane* was played by Master Robert Dundas, now Lord Chief Baron of Scotland; that of *Bajazet*, by Master Thomas (now General) Maitland; and that of *Moneses*, by Lord Maitland, now the Earl of Lauderdale: *Selima*, the speaker of this Epilogue, was Miss Dundas, then not entered in her teens, now Mrs Hamilton.

Spoken by SELIMA.

AND so, it seems, I'm to forget my crying,
My griefs, my transports, and my fears of dying,
(I'm told 'tis all your grown-up players' way,)
To laugh with you, and talk about the play.
But I can tell you, there are folks behind,
Shaking their heads, and speaking out their mind.
They say, "At best 'tis but an idle thing
To make a boy palaver like a king;
And as for misses, in our wiser days,
They worked their samplers, and ne'er heard of plays."
And yet, thinks I, my grave ones, I can see,
That older folks act plays as well as we.
I have a little friend, who writes me down,
What your fine ladies act in London town;
Such plays!—I'll tell you, if I don't forget,
For I'm not perfect in their titles yet.
First, there's a club of beaux, whose conversation
Helps them to act a play they call Flirtation;
They have a strange long nickname—let me see—
Poh!—it begins with *Mac*, and ends with *ee*.

And next the ladies, freer than with you,
They have their nightly club and tavern too;
They call't the Coterie, it lasts all seasons,
They play with *blacking-balls*, and treat with *raisins*.*
Then there's a place, she says, that beats them all,
'Tis neither concert, opera, play, nor ball;
But there are gods, and goddesses, and graces,
'Tis—I forget their queer hard names for places—
(She wrote the very night it was to be on,)
A vast large—Pan—I think they call't—Pantheon.
Besides all these, there's many a new invention,
Naughty, she says, and which she dares not mention:
I fear me, when some great folks act for life,
They seldom play Moneses' loving wife;
Were they to speak their mind, they'd cry, "'twould please us
To live with Bajazet, and hang Moneses."
But while the number even of harmless plays,
Remains for grown-up misses now-a-days,

* These were the tokens of approbation or dissent used at the ballots of this female club, instituted about the time this Epilogue was written, but, to the credit of the fashionable world, very soon discontinued.

Grudge not to us the poet's melting strain,
Where Tamerlane and virtue hold their reign:
We'll grow, in time, to follow fashions too,
And act the scenes you bigger ladies do.

EPILOGUE

FOR

LOGAN'S TRAGEDY OF RUNNYMEDE.

This Epilogue was never used; the Royalty Theatre, at which Runnymede was intended to be brought out, having been interdicted by authority.

The allusions were made to the political cant of the time, and the phrases are those of the English law, quoted in vindication of the rights of freemen; but the trifle is not worth a glossary.

THROUGH five long acts, our poet brings to view
What men of yore for freedom's sake would do;
Allow me, then, a few plain lines to tell,
In female breasts what free-born spirits dwell.

Say, husbands, on this truly British theme;
Is there a *baron* but may find a *feme?*
In distant provinces, and country seats,
Though some plain rural *notables* one meets,
Who bear a tyrant Nimrod's sovereign sway,
And drudge in household cares their lives away,
Content, like those of France, to murmur and obey,
Yet these are few; there's not a British land,
Whose dames dispute not this unjust command.
There with this high prerogative at strife,
For her dear freedom fights the feudal wife;
For her dear freedom many a battle tries
Of sturdy sullens, melting tears, and sighs;
Maintains the war in all its various forms,
Saps by soft fits, or in hysterics storms;
Till, worn with loud alarms, and hard-fought fields,
The vanquished monarch to her prowess yields,
And with a half-forced smile, or baffled frown,
Allows her *habeas corpus* up to town.
Here, for this freedom thrives in London air,
She finds her Runnymede in Grosvenor-square;
Her *magna charta*—cards for fifty nights,
And a long milliner's bill—her *bill of rights;*
The *trial by peers* would gladly undergo,
And no *attachment* bears—but to a beau.

If, after all, even in this liberal air,
Prudery may name a few more passive fair,
Proud of a wife's, or of a mother's part,
A child's affection, or a husband's heart,
Whate'er their rank, the fashion wont go down;—
We'll all resist this *influence of the crown*.

EPILOGUE

TO

M'DONALD'S TRAGEDY OF VIMONDA.

METHINKS our heroine was wondrous weak
To let her match a goblin's story break;
Now, thank our stars! that childish creed is lost,
That gave such mighty influence to a *ghost*;
Nor ever, as in those old-fashioned times,
"Perturbed spirits" speak of secret crimes;
Except when raised by some shrewd swindling brain,
They thump, and scratch, and vanish in Cock-lane.
Our lovers' spousals meet with no delays
From phantom visitations now-a-days.
More solid bars their tender wishes cross,
Deeds to indite, and parchments to ingross;
Settling of jointures, pin-money debates,
Weighing of rents, and wedding of estates:

Pale stewards rise, with fate of manors big,
And lawyers walk, and shake—a three-tailed wig.
Or sometimes, such frail things are human ties,
Perturbed spirits *after* wedlock rise;
Spirits of anger, sullenness, and strife,
That blight the genuine sweets of married life;
Passions, that every exorcism brave,
And cold indifference from affection's grave!
Or should the wife have some familiar sprite,
(Such things there are,) that haunts the house by night,
He, like our bard, if rightly understood,
May prove no ghost perhaps, but—flesh and blood.
But here, within our mimic kingdom's bounds,
Still antique ghosts may walk their nightly rounds;
May truncheoned Hamlets stalk, or Banquo's shade
Drive Scotland's tyrant from his seat dismayed;
Our spirits rise at every opening door,
And "troops of shades" costs but some chalk the more.
Could but our magic spells contrive to bind
Spirits before the curtain, as behind,
Poets no more should dread the fatal sound
Of harsh and angry goblins rising round,
Of those who howl above, or hiss beneath the ground,

But milder powers should breathe their influence here,
And join the Muses' smile, the Muses' tear.
If such kind spirits hither make resort,
Weak as we are, we'll not be frightened for't;
Let them walk here, we'll use no charm to cure it,
And though *our house* be haunted—we'll endure it.

INSCRIPTION

FOR A HUT, IN A BEAUTIFUL SITUATION IN THE HIGHLANDS.

I had forgotten the two following Inscriptions, (written for a place which long since changed its possessor, and has lost more than half its beauty,) till they were recalled to my memory by a letter from a gentleman in the Isle of Wight, mentioning that they were found on the shore of that island, after the shipwreck of a vessel, of which he did not mention (or if he did I have forgotten) the name, in circumstances which shewed them to have belonged to one of the unfortunate passengers. Annexed to the parcel was a note, mentioning them to be the productions of the author of the "Man of Feeling." The incident was singular, though the subject was trifling. I endeavoured, but without success, to trace by what means it occurred.

THOU who hast traced the windings of the dell,
If haply here thy wildered steps are led,

Read what the Genius of the rural scene,
As once upon my raptured ear he poured
The wildest warblings of his oaten reed,
Spoke when he closed the song.

"Not these alone,
The woodland bower, or bank with violets dressed;
Not the first smile of meek-eyed morn, that wakes
The carol of the groves; the water's fall,
Its murmurs wafting on the gentle gale,
That breathes on evening's bosom; not the gleam
Of setting sun, that gilds the tufted shade,
Nor all the mingled forms of beauty else,
That nature's lavish hand hath spread around:
Not these alone delight, save when the soul
Congenial meets them, artless, pensive, pure;
Who, following nature in her peaceful walks,
Unenvied hears the din of life arise,
Toils of the great, and follies of the gay;
And, wrapped in calm contentment's russet robe,
Pities the pageant bliss of half mankind."

EPITAPH

ON

WILLIAM GORDON, ESQ. OF NEWHALL,

IN ROSS-SHIRE. *

No boastful pencil bids this stone attest
What science crowned him, or what genius blest;
Yet may it witness, with a purer pride,
How many virtues sunk when GORDON died.
Clear truth, and native nobleness of mind,
Open as day, that beamed on all mankind;
Warm to oblige, too gentle to offend,
That never made a foe, nor lost a friend.
Nor yet from fortune's height, or learning's shade,
It boasts the tribute to his memory paid;

* Mr Gordon was one of my earliest and dearest friends. For a sketch of his character, see the MIRROR, No. 90. written by the late Lord Abercromby.

But that around, in grateful sorrow steeped,
The humble tenants of the cottage wept.
Those simple hearts that shrink from grandeur's blaze,
Those artless tongues that know not how to praise,
Feel and record the worth that hallows here
A friend's remembrance, and a sister's tear.

VERSES

WRITTEN

AFTER RECOVERING FROM THE FIRST ANGUISH OF A SEVERE FAMILY-AFFLICTION.

Oh, swell anew that solemn strain!
Oh, breathe again that dying sound!
That sadly soothes affliction's pain;
That stills the throb in sorrow's wound.

Yet would I not forget my woe;
The sad remembrance let me keep;
Those sounds that bid my sorrows flow,
Those sounds can bid their anguish sleep.

Though deep the sigh, the sigh was dear,
To joys long lost reflection gave;
And sweet to me the conscious tear
That drops upon affection's grave!

And there shall sorrow sit apart,
And watch the turf that wraps their mold;
And press their memory to my heart,
Till that poor drooping heart be cold.

DRAMATIC PIECES.

THE

PRINCE OF TUNIS,

A TRAGEDY.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL OF EDINBURGH, 1773.

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MRS YATES,

IN

THE CHARACTER OF THE GENIUS OF SCOTLAND.

Amidst a wild romantic scene, the Genius advances to the sound of solemn music.

WHERE yonder distant hills majestic rise,
And bare their snowy bosoms to the skies,
In sacred solitude I love to dwell,
While the big torrent foams around my cell:
Genius of Scotland! there aloft I stand,
And view the growing glories of the land.
'Twas there the Son of Fingal towered along,
And, 'midst his mountains, rolled the flood of song;
'Twas there the heroes of that song arose,
And Roman eagles found unvanquished foes;
The rugged cliff, the barren desart, smiled,
For I, and loose-robed Freedom, walked the wild.
But now, beneath a milder planet's reign,
No steely phalanx desolates the plain;

The gentler arts, that polish human kind,
Tread the soft lawn, and leave it blessed behind;
Commerce and peace unlock their stores around,
And classic muses sing on classic ground.
Late as I marked, with fond maternal eyes,
On every side my laurelled sons arise;
Deeds, else forgot, that graced the distant age,
I saw immortal in the Scottish page;
In Scotland trimmed, the lamp of wisdom blaze,
And heard her song that sounds to future days;
'Twas mine the meed of honour to bestow,
And weave the wreath that crowns the deathless brow.
An humble poet, scarcely known to fame,
Stepped doubtful forth, one little sprig to claim.
"From earliest youth," he said, "he wished to find
Where first the passions nature's robe unbind;
For nature's sons with artless pencil drew,
And walked on tragic ground with her in view:
If on his native stage his scenes may live,
He asks no praise but what the heart can give."—
Such were his words; but yours the power to raise
The buds of genius with the dew of praise.
With you his cause I leave; his story hear;
And, if applause it merits,—shed a tear.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA,

AS REPRESENTED AT EDINBURGH, IN 1773.

BARBAROSSA,		Mr Inchbald.
HASSAN,	*Officers under Barbarossa.*	Mr Woods.
HELI,		Mr Digges.
SULADDIN,		Mr Webb.
ZATMA,		Mr Fleetwood.
ZULIMA,		Mrs Yates.
ZEYDA,		Miss Glassington.

Slaves, Soldiers, &c.

SCENE—*The Royal Palace of Tunis.*

THE

PRINCE OF TUNIS.

ACT I.

ZULIMA *alone.*

'Tis done! and Barbarossa is my lord!
Ah! my Arassid! is it lawful now
For wretched Zulima to think on thee?
Yes: by the weakness of my soul betrayed,
Though now another claim the withered love
That died with him, yet while reflection lives
Within this tortured mind, on the sad theme
Shall sleepless Memory her musings bend,
And, like a miser, at the midnight-hour,
Steal from the world, and count my hoarded woes!

Nor ever shall Barbarossa blame my tears,
Since for the friend his valour has revenged.

Enter ZEYDA.

My Zeyda, thou art welcome: but for thee
This world were like a desert to my sight,
Howling and wild, without one friendly hand
To guide my steps, or paint my thoughts to peace.

Zey. Are these the looks, my Zulima, that brides
Wear on their wedding days? Thy Zeyda's aid,
Weak as it was, though from an honest heart,
Is needless now. A conquering soldier's arm,
The valiant Barbarossa's, guards my friend,
And mocks the threatening of her sorrows past.

Zu. Her sorrows past!—when will her sorrows end?
Oh! never, never, till this swelling heart
Shall beat no more! Zeyda, the flattering hopes
That other wretches, desolate like her,
Turn their faint eyes on with a gleam of comfort,
To Zulima are lost; relentless Fate
Has fixed her doom of wretchedness beyond
The wildest wish of Fortune to recal.

Zey. Banish those dread reflections from your mind.
Though Zeyda be a partner in your woe,
Too near a partner; though a sister's tears

Mingle with thine upon Arassid's bier;
Yet would her friendship hide them as they flow.
Revolving years may win our sorrows from us,
And dull forgetfulness, with silent pace,
Creep on our souls, and lull them into patience.

Zul. It shall not, Zeyda. Oh! this heart were vile,
If e'er the idle pageantry of life
Could check its virtuous sorrow. I and Sorrow
Were long ere this familiar. When a child,
Before my sense could reason on my tears,
My nature shed them. Thou hast often heard
The piteous tale: when first I lisped out words,
'Twas but to talk imperfectly of sorrow.

Zey. I cannot grieve for what thy childhood suffered.
The storm that wrecked thee on our coast has given
A friend to Zeyda, and a queen to Tunis.

Zul. A queen to Tunis! How my thoughts are up,
And tremble at themselves! Alas! my Zeyda,
There was a time when this fond heart was proud
To think of sharing empire with Arassid.
At his good father's death, he flew to find me,
(It gave a sceptre; yet an honest tear
Stole from his eye,) "'Tis now my time," he said,
"To place my Zulima where worth like her's

[illegible] But a little while
[illegible] whose kindness
[illegible] of nature.
[illegible] other days
[illegible] Dark-eyed Treaso
[illegible] had watched
[illegible]

[illegible] of the maze
[illegible] in my sight,
[illegible] mine.
[illegible] love," he said:
[illegible] the Prophet
[illegible] them, alas!
[illegible] the spur,
[illegible] I stood,
[illegible] calmness,
[illegible] he said.
[illegible] friend;
[illegible] reports him,
[illegible]

In sufferings feeble, yet too strong to break!
Why was my infancy for this preserved
From the swoln billows of the raging flood!
I should have died, when on my guiltless soul
Death, like a sleep, had fallen, and given it bliss.

Zey. For deeds of mercy by the arm of Heaven
Thy life was rescued. Flushed with haughty conquest,
When Barbarossa led his savage bands,
O'er the wide waste of streets, that smoked in ruin,
To plunder and to carnage, thou couldst stop
Destruction's course; by thee the thunder lost
Its fiercest fire, and spared devoted Tunis.

Zul. Oh! call not to my mind that day of horror.
Though many a parent mourned their children slain,
Though many a widow wailed their fallen lords,
For me remained more complicated anguish.
When it was rumoured, that the prince was come
With Barbarossa, and the sultan's aid,
To drive usurping Treason from his throne,
Trembling I sat to watch the dread event,
And breathed unutterable prayers to Heaven
To shield his precious life. Around me rose
The horrid din of arms, the shouts of battle.
Still, as the noise grew louder, did my heart
Beat to the alarum of their clanging trumpets,

And, with the mingled flush of hope and fear,
My eager eyes stared wildly for Arassid.
Streaked with the purple lines of deathful war,
At length a soldier entered my apartment.
The native fierceness of his look was tempered
With softness ill assumed. He bowed before me,
Bade me forget my fears, and rest secure
In Barbarossa's friendship. Faint and breathless,
With terror faultering on my lips, I asked
For my Arassid. The barbarian turned,
And wept, or seemed to weep.—"The prince," he said,
"Lives with the blessed! But Barbarossa's friendship
Stretches to all his friends." I heard no more.
Would that my Zeyda's care had then forgot me,
Nor to a wretch, like me, recalled the life
That teems with curses! Nay, I pray thee, weep not;
I cannot weep!

Zey. My brother!

Zul. Speak, my Zeyda,
Speak all his praise; it is the little comfort
That yet is left me: though it pierce my heart,
Yet will I press the fond remembrance there,
Till, in some favoured hour, it burst with thinking
Of what I was.

Zey. Oh! urge it not so far;
Live for his friends, and for the friends of Tunis.
Begirt with soldiers foreign to its fate,
The valiant Barbarossa, warm and open,
May hear some counsels hurtful to its peace.
But thou shalt smooth the rugged hand of power,
And teach thy lord the softer sway of mercy.

Zul. Alas! my Zeyda, how that title sounds
With Barbarossa's name! And must I smile
With poor hypocrisy? chase from my heart
The dear remembrance of an honest love,
And, fashioning my features into gladness,
Crawl on the earth, and prostitute my looks
For splendid misery, and titled meanness?
My virtue will not let me, nor my pride;
A woman's pride, that fortune cannot vanquish.

Zey. There spoke the Zulima Arassid loved!
Is there no blush upon his sister's cheek,
The daughter of a king? But I'll forget it;
Humility is a dependant's virtue,
And Barbarossa is the lord of Tunis.

Zul. Forgive me, Zeyda; though at times I talk thus,
Yet am I weak and fearful.—Do not hate me!—
Witness the vows, that, fresh upon my lips,

Have made me Barbarossa's! Is't not so?
Oh! say I am not, and I'll bless thy tongue
That gives me freedom.

Zey. Do not think I blame thee.
I know thy virtue. 'Tis our sex's weakness,
Perhaps its praise, to want the stern resolve,
That arms unyielding natures: who of women,
Forlorn as thou wert, and beset with perils,
Had, in despite of prudence, fiercely scorned
The shelter which she offered?

Zul. Ah! my Zeyda,
It was not prudence, it was something meaner.
My gratitude I owed him for myself;
Then, as Arassid's friend, mingling his tears
In one sad stream with mine, he claimed my favour,
But did not talk of love; till, at the last,
He wooed me in compassion's gentle form,
To chase despair and anguish from his breast.
Worn, as I was, and stupified with sorrow,
My soul had lost the strength, that should have guarded
Her firm relentless faith; and Barbarossa,
With ceaseless importunity, prevailed
To gain a loveless shadow to his arms.
But see, he comes. Oh! do not leave me long,

For thou canst hear my grief.

[*Exit* ZEYDA.

Why do I tremble?
Methinks it is pollution to approach him;
And something, with the chilly hand of Fear,
Knocks at my heart, and thrills the blood within me.

Enter BARBAROSSA.

Bar. My Zulima! my bride! That name demands
A warmer look. Why turns thy moistened eye
From Barbarossa? he's a suitor still.
The sterner customs of an eastern husband
His love foregoes; but Zulima requites him
With unrelenting coldness.

Zul. No; she feels
The gratitude that Barbarossa's love,
And Barbarossa's friendship, well demand.
She can no more; perhaps her nature wants
The warmth, that glows in more exalted minds.

Bar. For me alone she wants it. What condition
Of love assiduous, of unwearied service,
Can win her smile for me?

Zul. Alas! her cheek,
In sorrow steeped, has lost the power to smile.
Ah! too unworthy of assiduous love,

And much too humble for unwearied service,
She only asks the privilege of mourning.
Bar. Inhuman to herself! Can ceaseless tears
Re-animate the dust of fallen virtue?
Can the loud wailings of affliction break
The fettered sleep of death?
Zul. I know they cannot;
But reason may not measure what we should be,
When thus we are. There is some hidden power
More forcible than are a thousand reasons,
That will not be outpleaded.
Bar. Such power there is,
That weans us from our woe. Unheeded Time
Creeps, like some thrifty pilferer, on our thoughts,
Till by unvalued atoms he has stolen
Accumulated sorrows. But for thee
He rolls his suns in vain; thy cherished grief
Mocks every common cure.
Zul. Ah! too uncommon
My cause of grief. When first you found me weeping
O'er the fallen joys my hopes had fondly built,
Beyond the poor proportion of my merit
Your favour graced me; but on me that favour
Was ill bestowed; Misfortune's chilly blast
Had nipped the budding wishes of my heart,

And withered every passion. This I urged
In answer to your love, but urged in vain,
Till in some hour of weakness you o'ercame me,
And triumphed in extorting from my lips
The promise, not the will. If this was falsehood,
I own it now; spurn this betrayer from you,
Who joined her hand to thine, but never felt
The hallowed sympathy of meeting souls
To make such union blessed.

Bar. I'll hear no more.
This is the canker breath of Melancholy,
That blights our peace, and turns the dew of heaven
To the rank moisture of a pestilence.
Forbear to raise those spectres of the past,
That shed such gloom around them; be the mistress
Of me and Tunis: new-invented joys
Shall court thee to possess them, and thy brow,
Losing those dark ungracious lines of sadness,
Beam with the light of beauty and of love.

Zul. Alas! you know me not. I am not wont
To think so lightly. New-invented joys
Will court in vain, when the affection's dead
That should have heard them. I had treasured up
The little comforts of my soul together
In one unsullied bond of virtuous friendship,

Let me not blush to own it,—virtuous love!
You cannot frown, my lord, on this confession;
For you yourself were my Arassid's friend.

Bar. Arassid's friend! And was I not his friend?

Zul. You said so then, when first your pity looked
Upon the hapless mourner of Arassid.
The prince's virtues claimed the noblest friendship;
But the soft ties, that linked our souls together,
Made friendship poor; for they were formed so early,
That, like the first instinctive calls of nature,
Our bosoms felt them. When a helpless infant,
Thrown by a tempest on his father's coast,
The remnant of a shipwreck, where my parents
Had met the fate that spared their wretched daughter,
With some poor relics of a better fortune,
Which the rude storm had left me, the good king
Received me like some gift from Heaven, and reared
This orphan as his own. Arassid's age
Was nearly mine. The innocent delight,
That warms the breasts of cherubs to each other,
Mated our tender minds, and when at play,
Even in the very fashion of our sports,
We could not brook another's fellowship.
Our childish joys and cares we had in common;
And each was like a twin-tuned lute, that held

A tone no longer than its kindred bosom
Made music on that string. Oh! I could talk,
And weary out the sun, on such a theme.
You'll pardon me; it moves you.

Bar. 'Twas a deed
That cries damnation with the voice of thunder.
Arassid is in heaven.

Zul. Yes; if virtue
E'er claimed its mansions, there Arassid is.

Bar. And where is Barbarossa?

Zul. Barbarossa!

Bar. Was it his voice that called me?—Hush! 'tis gone.—
Didst thou not speak?

Zul. I did. You much amaze me,
By starting to such question.

Bar. Zulima!

Zul. What would my lord? Your lip is pale and trembling!
You are not well.

Bar. Not well! Soft you a while.—
A man! a soldier! fie on't.—Do not wonder,
My Zulima, at this. Once at the Porte,
I swallowed poison of a murderous slave,
Whom, in some trifling instance, I had angered,

And though the power of med'cine from my life
Withheld its mischief, yet the baneful drug
Left this attaint upon my blood, which now
For years I had not felt, and hoped it gone.
'Tis but a moment's qualm; and it were nothing,
But for the note of others. I would talk,
'Tis likely, strange, and wild, and charge perhaps
My innocent soul with crimes. You did observe it?

Zul. I did not, truly.

Bar. It was better not,
And thus are noble natures. But I have been,
Where those, who knew me not, would draw conceits
Of horrible doings, from the wandering phrase
Of my distempered fancy.

Zul. Think no more on't.
But Hassan comes; I leave you to his care.
What the poor duty of a wretch, like me,
Amidst her woes, can give, my gratitude
Commands for Barbarossa. [*Exit* ZULIMA.

Bar. Ha! my gratitude
Commands for Barbarossa! Had she cursed me,
I could have borne't; this is a scorpion's sting,
My gratitude!—A smooth and deep-dyed villain.

Enter HASSAN *at the opposite side of the Stage.*

Has. He's rapt in something deeply.—Barbarossa!

Bar. I've heard that blood will speak!—Arassid's blood!
My gratitude!—'tis hotter in my cheek
Than burning hell!—A false perfidious villain!
Ha! [*seeing* HASSAN,] thou didst urge it too; yes, traitor, thou!
Give me Arassid. [*Seizing him.*]

Has. By the holy prophet,
I know not what thou meanest! I am no traitor.
Had I been false, Arassid might have lived
The prince of Tunis still. I would that all
Around us were but half as true as I am
To Barbarossa's cause.

Bar. Forgive me, Hassan.
I was entangled in a dream of fancy,
And knew not what I did.

Has. Dreams may be well
For those, whom peace hath licensed to indulge
Their spleen at leisure. Conquests hardly won
Need wakeful eyes to keep them.

Bar. By this prologue,
There's danger to be told of. What's the matter?

Has. It is the quality of boastful courage
To scorn suspicion. I am old enough
To like this squint-eyed mistress much beyond
The tricked and flaunting honour. I have sounded,

By well-instructed spies, the hearts of Tunis,
And find that dangerous mischief is among them,
Did but occasion rouse it.

Bar. Thus it will be,
If our suspicion dwell on little tales,
That zeal may fetch us. Warm unthinking minds,
In the loose hour of revelry and riot,
Will give their tongues the licence of the time,
And talk sedition, though they never mean it.

Has. Ay; but these murmurs have a deeper root.
Arassid's death—

Bar. Name not Arassid's death!
If thou hadst power to raise the blackest fiend,
He could not drive the colour from my cheek
Like that bare name.

Has. Farewell. I came to talk
With Barbarossa; I have found a dervise,
Who wears his courage in a talisman,
And trembles at a sound.

Bar. Hassan, beware;
You'll find I have enough of valour left
To punish insolence.

Has. By Heaven, it galls me,
Beyond the patience of a man, to hear
My honest counsels for thy safety treated

With such a cold regard. Say, shall I speak?
Or shall Conspiracy unquestioned walk,
Till it has strength to beard us at broad noon?

Bar. Thy cautions mean me well. Speak, I will hear them.

Has. Arassid's death, that hitherto had passed,
On our report, by pestilence occasioned,
Some traitor hath divulged. Last night was held
A secret meeting of his former friends;
Revenge was hotly talked of; Zeyda's title,
As daughter to the king, asserted loudly;
And oaths of mutual obligation sworn
To faith and secresy.

Bar. How learned you this?

Has. A Spanish renegado's was the place
They chanced to meet in. An old slave of his,
Whom bribes had gained me, overheard in part
Their conversation. Shall I trace this deeper?
Or strike their treason, ere it rise to hurt us?

Bar. No; not so rashly. There's a ripeness wanting
To give our measures colour. We might crush them;
But from their blood would sprout a thousand foes,
That gentler means may win. Assume the boldness
Of injured virtue; teach me to belie
The gnawings of this bosom, and to lift

Mine eye, with folding of the hands together,
At the false rumours of Arassid's murder.
Double our guards, but yet in such a seeming
As may not shew mistrust; unbend your looks,
And hide the scrutiny of your eye beneath
The frolic garb of care-deriding smiles.

Has. Why, this is Barbarossa; this the conduct
That holds him lord of Tunis. Think it done.

Bar. Thy faith shall be rewarded. Fare thee well.

[*Exit* HASSAN.

Oh! coward guilt!—How fallen is Barbarossa!
Once famed for valour and unvanquished arms;
Now, like some paltry villain, skulking basely,
Beneath the covert of insidious looks,
Hypocrisy, and falsehood! What to me
The pride of empire, or the bliss of love?
Still in my cup this spotted adder lies,
Taints every draught, that Fortune can bestow,
Unsceptres royalty, and blasts enjoyment! [*Exit*,

ACT II.

ZULIMA *and* ZEYDA.

Zul. WHY hast thou called me, Zeyda, from my woe?
I am in love with sorrows. I could sit
The live-long day, and ruminate upon them.
Methinks there is a dignity in sorrow,
Lord of its sighs, and conqueror of the world!
What tidings has my faithful Zeyda learned,
That can be aught to me? they cannot change
The colour of my fortune. Speak, my friend;
Thy look has wonder in't. Reveal it boldly;
It cannot fright me. I am lost alike
To hope and fear.

Zey. Did ever Barbarossa
Tell thee the manner of my brother's death?
By pestilence was it not?

Zul. Ah! why that question?
Yet 'tis an honest memory of thy brother,
And I would cherish it. It was, my Zeyda.

Zey. Was he particular in his tale?
Zul. Alas!
But too particular. Yet much I asked;
And though it seemed to hurt him, for his voice
Grew fainter as he spoke, I pressed the subject
With eager repetition of my questions.
O! had his Zulima been there to watch him,
When all his pale attendants stood aloof,
To read the wishes of his languid eye,
And suck the poison from his quivering lips!
The kind infection might have reached my heart;
One common grave had held us, and our souls,
Upon some viewless chariot of the sky,
Together reached the blessed abodes of heaven.
Zey. I know not what to think. Were it not strange
To hear Arassid lived?
Zul. Arassid lived!
Why beats my heart, as if 'twere possible?
What dost thou mean?
Zey. 'Tis but a little since,
As in the windings of the palace-garden
Pensive I walked, I marked a Georgian slave
Watering the sun-burnt flowers. His look had something

Of better days in't. Round, as I approached,
He cast his eye, and saw his fellows distant:—
"Lady," he said, "if rightly I have traced
Resembling features to the prince I loved,
Thou art Arassid's sister. I alone,
Of all the attendants on his flight, remain,
When to the Sultan's false pretended friendship,
His cause he trusted. Know, my honoured lady,
Thy brother lives, though far removed from Tunis;
Within a prison's hateful walls he pines
His days in wretchedness."—He would have ended
This tale of wonder, when he saw approach
The watchful Hassan. At the sight of him,
Sudden he stopped, and whispered:—"Hassan comes;
I have no time for more; good angels guard thee!
Of all the followers of Barbarossa,
Heli alone hath virtue to be trusted.
Your noble brother knew him."—As he spoke,
The haughty chief drew near, and sternly ordered
The Georgian to be gone.

Zul. Arassid living!—
How my head swims!—Alive! imprisoned! ha!
Speak it again. He lives! thy brother lives!—
Should this be true!—Where is the Georgian now?

Zey. When the amazement of the words he uttered
Had left me power to think, again I sought him;
He was not to be found.

Zul. Not to be found!
Some circumstances press upon my memory,
With dreadful comments on them. Yet the Sultan's
Reported brave and generous.

Zey. I am lost
In doubt and wonder! On the death of princes
Suspicion ever dwells, and babbling rumour.
My nature is not jealous; yet the slave
Could hardly be deceived.

Zul. Zeyda, to you
The thought is guiltless; but to me! to me!—
The wife of Barbarossa! 'tis distraction.
"Heli alone has virtue to be trusted."
Knowest thou that Heli?

Zey. I have sometimes seen him.
A melancholy man, with thoughtful pace
Measuring the palace-walks. When I had failed
To find the Georgian, I employed a slave
To seek this Heli, and conduct him hither.

Zul. Would he were come!

Zey. It grates my soul to think
So basely of mankind. The Sultan's noble.

But I have heard, that in the minds of princes,
By custom sanctified, and rules of state,
Inhuman maxims dwell, disclaimed by virtue.

Enter a Slave, who speaks to ZEYDA.

Slave. Lady, the chief you sought attends your pleasure.

Zey. Give him admittance. [*Exit Slave.*

Zul. How my bosom throbs!

Enter HELI.

Zey. Heli, approach.—Look not so distant on us;
We know thy worth, and hold thee for our friend.

Zul. Thou wert Arassid's friend; for that I thank thee.
Behold the mourners of Arassid's death
Implore thy friendship now.

Heli. What I can give,
The memory of Arassid may command.
Excuse my boldness; art not thou that fair one,
With whom the gentle prince's heart was twined,
Even from his infant years?

Zul. Alas! I am.

Heli. I've heard him talk of thee. His own afflictions,

Smiling amidst the anguish of his heart,
He suffered bravely; but the name of Zulima
Undid his patience. He would grasp my hand
I'the ecstasy of grief, lift up his eyes
Wildly to heaven, and curse his wayward fate,
That sunk with him the lovely Zulima:
Then, when his gushing tears had calmed his passion,
Kneel down, and pray unnumbered blessings on thee.

Zul. Blessed be the tongue, that talks of my Arassid!

Speak, gentle stranger; though it tear my heart,
I'll thank thee for the tale.

Zey. You loved Arassid;
You saw him die.

Heli. I did not.

Zul. Ha! You did not?

Heli. It moves you, lady; think no more of that:
You are too tender for a theme so sad.

Zul. No; I would hear it all. I have been used
To speak of horrors.

Heli. If Arassid lived,—

Zul. Ha! if he lived!—

Heli. Thy grief were torture to him.
Try to forget it.

Zul. Thou didst say, he lived!

Heli. Would that he did, and these white locks were laid
Low in the dust as he is!
Zul. In the dust!
Arassid is no more, then?
Zey. Check thy transport,
And let thy Zeyda question.—Mark me, Heli.
Though long undoubted has the tale been held,
That by infection, at the Sultan's court,
Arassid died, there are some rumours now
That speak a different story. I have heard,
That yet he lives, though Treason's arm hath crushed
His hope of empire.
Heli. Treason!
Zey. Foulest treason!
Treason in friendship's garb.
Heli. Has this been told?
Zey. It has.
Heli. Then he, who told it, has deceived you.
Zul. A Georgian slave, here in the palace-garden,
Who drags out life in chains, to Zeyda told it.
He was Arassid's once.
Heli. To minds, like his,
Nothing is so delightful as to wonder;
And hence they ever lend an easy faith

To marvellous recitals. But these eyes
Saw to the earth Arassid's cold remains,
And wept upon his grave. I would not wake
The memory of your sorrows.

Zul. Stay and speak them;
Their sting is pleasant, thou canst feel them too.

Zey. Surrounded by a rude unthinking band,
Whose ruthless trade is battle, upon thee
We lean for friendship, Heli, and protection.

Heli. You see me here, a soldier lèagued with soldiers,—
And so I am;—but yet I boast a heart,
The friend of justice and humanity.

Zul. Stranger, I thank thee. I am not accustomed
To judge of men; and seeming fair, I'm told,
Will bad men often look; but gentler far
Is thy appearance than the fierce associates,
Thy master loves. Thine eye has pity in't,
And sheds some comfort on a wretch forlorn,
Unused to feel it. May the righteous Allah
For her requite thee!

Heli. Lady, on the deeds
Of virtue and benevolence await
Rewards unasked. I have myself been tried
With keen adversity; the only bliss

That Fortune yet hath left me,—conscious virtue.
To-day, with more than wonted care, the guards
Are marshalled round the city. Barbarossa
Himself enjoined attention to their leaders;
'Tis said, from rumours of a Spanish force
Embarked from Afric. It is now my charge
To view their posts; and Hassan guards the palace.
The next command is mine. Then, when the round
Of Hassan comes, expect me to return.
I may have tidings for your private ear,
That much import you; but his jealous mind
Would draw suspicions from our conference.
The hour is come. Be counselled by your servant,
Beware of Hassan; though a soldier's plainness
Dwell in his looks, yet, subtle and designing,
He marks, unheeded, every smallest note,
That shews the heart of unsuspecting natures.

Zul. Wise was that counsel; but to me 'twas needless:
My soul abhors him. Barbarous as he is,
And trained to horrid war, I yet might bear him;
But it was he, whose serpent tongue announced,
Amidst his master's desolating conquest,
The death of my Arassid. With that form,
Dreadfully fierce, and smeared with clotted blood,

Still in my dreams he rises to my view,
And haunts me with the horrors of the past.

Heli. Look not, as if you marked him with suspicion;
For Barbarossa—but they come,—farewell.

Zul. Nay; I would shun their presence. Stay and meet them.
At the next watch, remember we expect thee.

[*Exeunt* ZULIMA *and* ZEYDA.

Enter BARBAROSSA *and* HASSAN.

Bar. Was't not the princess?

Has. Ha! and Zulima?

Bar. Heli, your age is privileged; in another,
That interview were ill.

Heli. By chance, my lord,
I met the princess, and your beauteous bride.

Bar. Nay, seek not an excuse; you need it not.
I know your virtue, and am glad to find,
That Zulima can leave her griefs awhile,
To talk with man. In time, she may be won
To think of life, of love, and Barbarossa.

Heli. Women are soft by nature; and of women,
The gentlest she. But now she talked of woe,
And left me to indulge it.

Bar. 'Tis a weakness;
But love's unused to chide. My tidings, Heli,
Suit not a woman's ear. In Doria's gallies,
The Spaniards are embarked.

Heli. Make they for Tunis?

Bar. Ay. Let them find us wakeful.

Has. Haughty Charles
Thinks Europe narrow for his great ambition;
And now beneath another clime he comes,
To scatter desolation.

Bar. Let him come.
I trust, the followers of my former glory,
With Tunis and the sultan for our friends,
May beard those Christian dogs. My brother's blood,
Whose body, blackened in the burning sun,
The desart eagles fed on, cries revenge;
And, like the lion from his tufted den,
Awakes the sleeping fury of my soul.

Has. The Algerine, who, in a light shalloop,
With some companions of his slavery, 'scaped,
Saw the young monarch, on a fiery steed,
Marshal his shouting troops: beside him stood
A reverend priest, who, with a silver cross
Their standards touching, called upon his Prophet
To bless the chosen warriors of the church,

And pour destruction on its foes profane.

Bar. Curse on those lying priests! their Prophet's words,
They tell us, scattered meekness, as they fell;
Yet have those hooded slaves, for ages past,
Let loose the havoc of relentless war
On every human tribe, whose honest minds
Refuse assent to some unmeaning jargon,
Some creed they hallow with their sainted strings.
But talking is no duty of a soldier.
When we shall see those holy ensigns wave
On Afric's parching air, our swords shall try
Their benediction's force. Be careful, Heli;
This round is yours. Here, in the lap of ease,
Our soldiers lie too long. In peopled cities,
Infectious pleasure blunts the edge of war.
Command your veterans nearer to the palace;
Myself will view their files. The word is, *Fortune.*

[*Exit* HELI.

Hassan, thy looks are dark. Is Charles so mighty,
That, by the very sounding of his name,
Our eyes should lose their lustre? I have seen thee
To hear of perilous deeds on tip-toe stand,
And, with your cheeks on fire, buffet the air,
With a brave longing for the promised danger.

Has. Let Christians run a tilt, and call it glory;
And the trim younker, in some fair one's eye,
Who pants to see his boldness, break a spear;
But we, whose beards become us, know that valour,
Without its use and purpose, is but sound.
We fight with Spain, while treason, at our back,
Is nursed in safety; nay, its poisonous brood
Lives in our ranks, and Barbarossa trusts them,
I fear me, most unwisely.

Bar. How is this?

Has. That Heli, honest Heli; he whose care
Visits our posts, and burnishes our arms,
That in the lap of peace have rusted vilely,—

Bar. Why, what of him?

Has. No matter; we are safe.
The man is virtuous; 'twere the worst of envy,
Did Hassan but suspect him.

Bar. Your suspicions
May stretch too far. I have ta'en note of Heli:
He once had wrongs of me, and bore them mildly;
And since I tried to blot them out by favour,
His faith has been approved.

Has. He has had wrongs,
And borne them mildly! So do wise men ever,
When most they mean revenge. The deepest hatred

Whets, like some forest-boar, its fangs in secret;
And, when it wounds, is mortal. I have marked him:
He is too much in love with melancholy,
And sullen thought, soon to forget his wrongs;
Nay, his best praise, his virtue, is a foe
To Barbarossa's cause. His virtue told
The chiefs of Tunis of Arassid's murder;
His virtue, with the sceptre of her fathers,
Would grace the hand of Zeyda. Precious virtue!
That Barbarossa thanks it for his ruin.

Bar. Arassid's murder! Ha! Did Heli know it?

Has. He did. It is the curse of daring deeds
To pause in acting them; but, half-resolved,
Ambition striving with that foolish weakness,
That baby conscience, that unsinews valour,
You wished to have this Heli on your side,
To sanctify the deed: he saw your purpose,
And would not understand you: it was done
By more determined souls. The honest Heli
Was silent then, and wept upon his grave.
'Twas but to-day I tried him with the mention
Of young Arassid's death: I marked him closely;
The workings of his soul denied him speech;
His blood made fiery courses on his cheeks,

And to the heavens he cast a furious look,
As if he would have borrowed lightning thence
To blast me with his eye; then turned, and left me,
To hide his passion.

Bar. Whither wouldst thou lead me?

Has. The chiefs of Tunis pay their court to Heli,
As if he were their king; to thee they bow,
But with indignant pride, scorning the fear
That checks it as it swells. But Heli's honest;
And did he say, your prince, Arassid, fell
By Barbarossa's means, it were but truth;
And did he whisper vengeance, it were virtue!
I am not much a coward: I can die
But once, like other men; but I would fall
Warm, like a soldier, in some field of glory,
Not sleep, and have my throat cut. 'Tis unmanly.

Bar. Where wouldst thou point my purpose? I am changed
From what I have been. Once, these words of thine
Had scattered death where'er suspicion led;
But I am weary of that savage prudence,
That quenches fear in blood. Fain would I try
The milder safety of indulgent power,
That melts the hatred of its foes away
With generous confidence.

Has. It will not be.
Ambition and revenge are native here,
The passions of the clime: in other lands
They call them vices: Hassan knows them better;
Success has made them virtues; and the prince,
Who'd rule by gentle means, should be immortal:
No gentleness can grow in Afric's soil.

Bar. Yet Afric's soil has reared a Zulima.

Has. She's but a woman.

Bar. Ay, and such a woman!
Thou'st seen me fight (I am no boaster,) bravely;
'Tis but a tyger's praise. This woman, Hassan,
Hath taught me nobler virtues: there is something
Of tender dignity in Zulima,
That makes the pride and fierceness of a soldier
Bend, like a child, before it: since I saw her,
I have been taught to hate my former self,
In loving her. This Heli is her friend;
But now he left her. Should my jealous fears
Blot the first hours that call her mine, with blood,
With Heli's blood?

Has. But now did Heli leave her?
Perhaps this Heli had some tale to tell
To make her love his master.

Bar. Love his master!

Has. Women love brave men ever; he was brave,
Who sent Arassid to the land of peace,
Yet courted Zulima.

Bar. How! how! Arassid!—
Cursed be his tongue! he durst not tell her that.

Has. I know not that he did. We came, 'tis true,
Somewhat abruptly on them. Should she weep
For her Arassid, Heli is too gentle
To talk on subjects that might grieve a lady.
He may be trusted.

Bar. Thou distract'st my soul!
I am too young in virtue to withstand thee;
And yet I will. Tempt me no further, Hassan,
Till thou hast proof to make my vengeance just.
Be watchful still; and, when occasion calls,
We'll strike together, and the proudest treason
Shall shrink before us. We have fought too long
In rotten causes: yet has conquest smiled
Upon our valour: in an honest cause,
The sword of Barbarossa shall command it. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Zul. FRIEND of the troubled soul! whose lenient hand
Smooths the dishevelled locks of wild Despair,
And dries the never-ceasing tear of Woe;
Thou rest of sleepless misery, gentle Death!
Why, in the midst of gay-illumined halls,
Where Mirth unthinking leads her festive train,
Why dost thou press thy dark and hateful form
To dash untasted bowls from Pleasure's lip;
Yet oft invoked, as with a lover's call,
Who chides the lazy moments as they pass,
Comest thou not, partial Power! to hearts, like mine,
That woo thee to approach? Eventful days
Of sorrow have I seen; but now, methinks,
I shudder at existence, as if life
Had in its bosom deeper curses left
Than all the past! My boding fancy sees
The storm that gathers round, and yet the grave,
The shelter of the wretched, is denied me.

Enter ZEYDA.

Zey. Too faithful to thy sorrow! Thus I said
Would Zulima be found, when Barbarossa
Pressed me to wean thee from thy ceaseless woe,
And tell thee of his love.

Zul. His love! my Zeyda:
Tell him how ill returned. Would that his pride
Could teach him to forget me!

Zey. Still unwearied
He talks of thee. He says, he loves thy grief,
Thy honest grief. But now he clasped my hand,
A tear bedewed his cheek! "Zeyda," he said,
"Perhaps I am unworthy of her love;
Perhaps I have been——but——" he stopped, and heaved
A sigh so piteous, that my heart forgot
My father's sceptre, and was quite his friend.

Zul. Sorrows, in long possession of the soul,
Without a rival, hold their sullen reign;
Else should I sometimes think upon his kindness.

Zey. There is in love a secret charm, that smooths
The rougher natures of the tyrant man.
Inured to arms, impetuous, fierce, and proud,
Was Barbarossa, till he saw my friend;
Now, with a tender and respectful eye,

He seems to watch the sentence of your lips,
And take his wishes from them.
Zul. Oh! too much.
It grates my nature thus to owe his love
Returns I cannot make. How hard the task,
That falsehood chooses! Oh! how blessed the paths
Of genuine truth and virtue unalloyed!
The wife of Barbarossa is a sound,
That carries treason with it. I'm perplexed
In every thought: assist me to subdue
The conscious pride, which ill endures the form
Of duty and regard. That cup, it seems,
[*Pointing to a Cup, which stands on a Table beside her.*
Hath custom added to the marriage rites,
And joyful brides present it to their lords,
The earliest offering of their wedded love.
Zey. Such is the custom; 'tis a quaint resemblance
Of sharing life together. Half the draught
The bridegroom drinks, and then returns her gift
With some rich present graced, and bids her drain
The beverage to their loves.
Zul. Ha! is it thus?
Thou dost not know, my Zeyda, what my fancy
Had started, as you spoke: but thoughts of horror

Are music to my soul. If half the draught,
The share of wretched Zulima, were poison,
Then might she sleep in quiet.

Zey. Shun, my friend,
Those dark imaginations. Though on clouds
Her pencil draws them, yet will fancy gaze
Upon their forms, till reason falls before them,
And horrid actings follow.

Zul. Fear not, Zeyda,
I have been tried in grief; what now should come,
That can unfix my soul? Did Heli say,—
Yes, Heli said, it rushes on my mind,
"I may have tidings for your private ear,
That much import you." In the words of doubt
Dwell shadowy hopes, and fears without a form!
Sure I am fallen beneath the shafts of Fortune,
And yet I fear again.

Zey. True to his hour,
Behold! the chief approaches.

Enter HELI.

Zul. In his brow
I mark the dwelling of some tragic tale,
That sleeps amidst its gloom.

Heli. There may it sleep,

My honoured lady. Heli would not add
Even to the sorrows of his bitterest foe.
'Tis not a woman's tale: it should be told
To steely-hearted warriors, whose hot rage
Might dry their tears, and kindle brave revenge.

Zul. And dwells not courage but in fields of war?
Heli, the strife of sorrows in the soul
Has taught this bosom strength.

Heli. You loved Arassid.

Zul. I did,—though Barbarossa is my lord,—
Why flits that shade of horror o'er thy face?
He was Arassid's friend.

Heli. Urge me no farther.

Zul. I charge thee, speak. You pity me in silence;
But most unhappy does that silence make me.

Heli. Heli would make thee happy, if he could.

Zul. Nothing can make me happy; but the wretched
Delight to know the deepest of their griefs.
I am too hard of heart. Could'st thou speak that,
Whose magic torpor would benumb my blood,
Thou wert the best of friends.

Zey. Thou see'st before thee
Arassid's sister. Was Arassid wronged?
She claims thy tale. The memory of the fallen
May yet have friends, and Zeyda knows her duty.

Zul. Which of Arassid's friends revere it more
Than Zulima? But Heli's colder prudence
Would stifle the remembrance.

Hel. Would'st thou know it?
Think of thy vows;—it touches Barbarossa.

Zul. I give them to the winds: the laws of virtue
Are the first ties of nature.

Hel. Oh, Arassid!
How much were those, were all the sacred bonds
Of friendship, justice, hospitable faith,
Broken to thee!

Zul. Go on.

Hel. The Sultan's court,
From treason's fury, with a prince's welcome,
Received Arassid. Open and sincere,
The generous prince, with unsuspecting heart,
Revealed the state of Tunis, torn by faction;
Her heroes wasted by internal war,
Ambition's easy prey. The crafty vizir
Embraced the smooth occasion, and perverted
The Sultan's purpose from Arassid's cause,
To seize himself on Tunis. Then at the Porte
Was Barbarossa; whose renown in war,
And stedfast hatred to the Christian name,
Endeared him to the Sultan. He was chosen

To lead the enterprise. This villain, Hassan,—

Zul. Hassan again! Beneath that name are hid
Demons of death and horror!

Hel. He suggested
The hellish scheme; and, to complete its baseness,
Wrought upon Barbarossa's lust of power,
That feared a rival in the hapless prince,
To———

Zul. What?

Hel. You're moved too much.

Zey. Oh, murderous villain!

Zul. Support me, Heli!—Speak, he did not kill him!

Hel. A ruffian, bribed to execute his purpose,
Stole on his sleep, and stabbed him.

Zey. Powers of heaven!
Where were the lightnings of your justice then?

Zul. Soft, I would breathe a moment!—Barbarossa!
My curses blast him!—Is he not my husband?
The murderer of my love!—See how he glares,
And points his wounds; whose purple mouths unfold
Their lips afresh, and cry aloud for vengeance!—
Hast thou no dagger for a hand resolved?

Hel. There may be daggers placed in faithful hands,

When justice shall demand them.

Zey. Barbarossa
Sits on the throne of Tunis! Barbarossa,
Decked in my brother's blood!—Is there no voice
That calls for justice there?

Zul. It shall be done!—
Yet spare me, Zeyda; coward as I am,
Beset around with complicated horrors,
Teach me the rage unquenchable, that burns
In more determined bosoms!—Yes, he dies!
Arassid bids it.

Hel. Let Arassid's friend
Presume to counsel. Rash ungoverned anger
Destroys its purpose. Tunis wants not friends,
Deliberate, yet resolved. To me entrust
The means of cooler and more certain vengeance.—
[*A flourish of Trumpets.*
But hark, he comes! 'tis Barbarossa's trumpet.

Zul. Thus let me meet him, whilst my bosom bursts
With speechless wrongs.

Hel. Let me intreat thee, lady,
To shun his presence now. By all that's holy,
Arassid's memory shall have ample justice!

Zey. It shall, by heaven it shall! A woman's arm,
Weak as it is, despair and reckless rage

Shall teach revenge.

Zul. That vengeance pour on me.
No wretch profaned the memory of thy brother
Like Zulima!—How fresh these fingers look,
That clasped his murderer's hand! Teach me to curse;
That leprosy may scald them till they rot,
A monument of horror!—Come, my Zeyda,
Support the labouring fury in my breast,
Blow all its fires, and point them to revenge!

[*Exeunt.*

Enter HASSAN.

Has. Heli, by me has Barbarossa ordered
The palace to be private.

Hel. I obey.

Has. The guard is your's. Let none approach his presence.
A special envoy, from the Porte arrived,
Demands his ear in secret.— [*Exit* HELI.
With what indignant eyes he looks upon me,
As if, already master of our fate,
He called this enemy of virtue forth
To answer for his crimes!

Enter BARBAROSSA.

Bar. My faithful Hassan,
Where is the Sultan's messenger?

Has. He comes,
Conducted by Suladdin. Whence the reason
He holds this cautious secrecy, I know not;
But he received me with his vizor on,
And looked as if he doubted my attendants,
When he unmasked.

Bar. 'Tis but a trick of state,
To awe the vulgar with mysterious seeming.—
Know you his name and quality?

Has. His name
Is Zatma; and this writing of the Vizir's,
That gives his delegated power in Afric,
Names him the friend of Mirza. From our conference,
I learned no farther of him; for he seemed
Niggard of talk, and marked me with an eye
Of squint suspicion; yet he looks too young
To have been versed in man, and draw mistrust
From long-experienced falsehood.—But he comes.

Bar. His port is noble; there's a claim of favour
Which some men's aspect bears, and such has Zatma.

SULADDIN *enters with* ZATMA.

Sul. Zatma, my lord; the envoy of the Sultan.

Zat. If I mistake not, this is Barbarossa.
By me the Sultan greets him. Fame has talked
Loud of his deeds; and, to the general voice,
The ruler of the faithful adds his own,
To crown the praise he merits.

Bar. He o'er-rates
The poor ability I have to serve him.
I boast a faithful heart; the rest is fortune's.

Zat. He knows, and values it. The Spaniard Charles,
Who proudly stands his opposite in glory,
Sated with blood of Christians, now collects
His scattered soldiers from their former fields,
To pour them upon Afric. But the Sultan
Relies unmoved on thee, and bids me promise
The speediest succour. Hold the winds but true,
In two days hence, a chosen Turkish band
Shall join the strength of Tunis.

Bar. I had hopes
To meet those Christians, with an honest trust
In some brave comrades of my battles past,
With Tunis to assist them; but this aid
Is precious, as it shows the Sultan's friendship;

Nor that alone.—Suladdin, see the guards
Placed in their different stations; as for Heli,
We need him in the palace.— [*Exit* SULADDIN.
Now we speak
To faithful ears. This Hassan, noble Zatma,
Is but another copy of myself,
And knows my nearest counsels.

Zat. I have heard
Of such a man; his valour is unquestioned;
So is his faith: the friends of Barbarossa
Wish all his followers true and brave as Hassan.

Bar. Then some of them are doubted?

Zat. No; as yet
I hope them faithful. But, in times like these,
When our best caution is beset with danger,
There's need of trusty friendships. I have heard,
The chiefs of Tunis bear unwillingly
The sway of Barbarossa. Here, in Afric,
Has discontent ne'er muttered what it would?
Or have its murmurs never reached the palace?

Has. They have; but Barbarossa would be noble
Beyond the line of prudence. I have warned him
As yet unheeded: though it carries danger,
It flatters me to find my fears confirmed.

Bar. A soldier, Hassan, cannot fear too late.

Has. But mine are past conjecture: I ha
them;
And shortly, if I err not, they will rise
To proof undoubted.

Zat. From the Porte I came,
Commissioned with assurances of friendshi
To Barbarossa. Let me aid your search;
Young as I am, I have not wanted practice
In policy of empire. Should I seem
The friend of factious Tunis, hear in secret
The murmurs of her spleen, and promise ju
Even in the Sultan's name, to heal her wro
This would run deeper than a thousand spi
To bare the plots of treason.

Bar. 'Tis a thought
That bears the fairest semblance. I would
Suspicion to its source, nor blindly strike
With undistinguished vengeance.

Has. This is well;
But let me point its purpose. There are so
Mistrust hath marked with danger, though
them
Amongst our friends: The very man who h
His guard upon the palace where we stand,
Is leagued with traitors.

Bar. Heli!
Has. Yes, if signs
Most palpable to reason may be trusted.
Zat. This Heli I have heard of. He is one,
Or rumour has deceived me, who repeats
The apothegms of virtue for the rule
That guides his actions; temperate in his life,
And cool to passion,——
Has. Therefore he's unsafe.
The people love him for that shew of worth;
And he, who has not pleasure for a motive,
Has some of darker colour.
Zat. I will sound him.
He was, if I mistake not, once the friend
Of young Arassid?
Bar. Prithee, no more of that;
I would not think of that.
Zat. Not think of that!
Bar. No matter, 'tis no matter.—Once the friend
Of young Arassid.
Has. Yes; I well remember,
When to the Porte Arassid fled for shelter,
Sequestered from the public eye he lived,
Nor saw even us, though chosen by the Sultan
To lead his cause in Afric; but this Heli

To his most private hours of cloistered sadness
Received admittance.

Zat. That may furnish means
To draw him from his covert.—When the night
Is farther worn, I'll meet him; let your guards
Have orders for the purpose, that I pass
Unquestioned in my walks.

Bar. This signet guides you

[*Giving him a Signet.*

At pleasure through the palace. From the garden
A secret passage leads to my apartment.
My eunuchs know the seal, and will obey you.

Zat. I shall not need their guidance. When a boy,
I dwelt some years in Tunis; by a kinsman,
Whose office had its station in the palace,
I was brought often hither, and the place
Still lives in my remembrance. One thing more,
And I'm instructed. Lives there not in Tunis,
Or was the story false, a beauteous maid,
Arassid loved? Her name was Zulima.
Has she no friends, or are they Barbarossa's?

Has. Talk not of her. There's something in her name
That blunts the honest spirit of a soldier;
And Barbarossa sighs a warlike soul

To softness at her feet. But soon her beauty
Will satiate when possessed.

Zat. Ha!

Bar. Nay, no more on't;
'Tis a weak theme.

Has. Forgive a soldier's bluntness.—
You're thoughtful, sir. [*To* ZATMA.

Zat. I was but just revolving
The instructions you have given. This same Heli—

Has. Is full of danger.

Zat. I will search his heart.

Bar. I'd have it searched. His semblance is a just one;
And though—I speak it with a blushing cheek—
I have not always held so fair a purpose,
Yet now I would be tender where the course
Of purple vengeance led. The heart's great lord
That speaks within us, though Ambition's trump
May drown his voice a while, will yet be heard:
Upon his suffrage still the soul depends,
Shrinks at his frown, or triumphs in his praise.

[*Exeunt.*

To him whom gold can win. When he returns,
If he can tell enough to lead my steps
A little farther, I will seal his lips:
I have a dagger here, that has no tongue
To speak the service it performs in secret.

Bar. Nay, not so bloodily. With Heli's death
Their plot shall wither; and the few, whose names
This scrawl has mentioned as the deepest traitors,
We will make sure: I pause upon the rest.

Has. Did not your plan of clemency restrain him,
Hassan would say, that every traitor left
Was a new root for treachery to spring from.

Bar. They cannot hurt us. When the stem is lopt,
These little branches wither and decay.
Besides our proper ministers of power,
The Turkish force will hold us doubly safe.
Suladdin says, that when his watch was changed,
As, by the setting sun, he marked the sea,
Dim on its level line he saw arise
Objects that seemed a fleet, and grew upon him,
Till darkness shut them out. If those the gallies
Sent by the Sultan, (as I trust they are,)
By the first dawning light they land in Tunis.

Has. And when shall Heli die?

Bar. I'd strike him boldly;

To show that justice waits upon my will
With open visage, and disdains to use
The secret bow-string. When the marriage-draught
From Zulima is brought me, call for Heli,
And kill him, like a soldier, in his arms.
This letter, in the presence of my guards,
Myself will read, and shew them why he fell.
Has. I like not much this ostentatious killing;
A dagger would do better when he sleeps.
The soldiers love him.
Bar. And they love their master.
We have been fellows in some glorious fields;
I fear not them.
Has. Whatever men may do,
The wise should fear. Each several one among them,
For wants relieved, for dangerous duty shared,
Regards him as a brother; and I've seen him
Fight, like some fabled chief, with countless numbers,
Till his arm tired with slaughter. I would slay him
With little danger.—Soft! It has been sometimes
A mark of honour, from a warlike prince,
Upon some favourite leader to bestow
The bridal beverage. Let this simple form
Pronounce his fate; and, while he drinks, my sword
Shall search his bosom.

Bar. Be it as thou wilt:
I am not wont to look to means like these
To strike a foe.—This is my wedding-night,
But the young loves are scared by thoughts of death;
Nor have I conquered yet remorse so much,
But that I tremble when I look on her
That weeps Arassid!—But, I had forgotten,
I would not have her seen by Zeyda now:
Zeyda may know too much. Give orders, Hassan,
That none, except the attendants on her person,
May have access to Zulima.

Enter a Soldier.

Sold. My lord, there is a slave without, who says
He comes to Hassan.

Bar. Let him be admitted. [*Exit Soldier.*

Enter a Slave.

Slave. Health to my lord! his slave awaits his pleasure.

Has. Thy tidings are not wont to need a preface;
Speak them without it.—Met the chiefs of Tunis?

Slave. To-night they have not; yet 'tis something past
Their wonted hour of meeting.

Has. Have you learned
The names of those associates?
Slave. Those alone
Described in Heli's paper. In the night
They come; their faces muffled; and their cloaks
Disguise their persons. I will try to learn them;
But they begin to doubt me, from that letter
Of Heli's lost.
Has. Then Heli has been with them?
Slave. I know not that. I heard them talk of him,
And boast his valour, and his skill in war.
Has. No matter; go, and swear thy faith unshaken.
Learn if they meet; and, if thou canst, return
Before the watch of midnight. [*Exit Slave.*
Bar. Then we wait not
For Zatma's search.
Has. I would not trust to Zatma.
Young as he is, too subtle for a boy,
And not so firm as man. I saw his face
Crossed with some lines, that showed a wavering soul
Amidst his proffered service.
Bar. Zatma too!—
For us mistrust and fear have marked the world!
Why do we bustle for the seats of power,

To sit with torture there? Lives there indeed,
Or is it but the dream of weaker minds,
Some genuine bliss, that dwells with humble virtue?
Perhaps there may; for Barbarossa feels,
Crowned with its wish, the toils of vice are vain.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter HELI.

Heli. 'Tis near the time, and expectation throbs
In burning bosoms for the sign of action!
If yet may reason pause upon the deed,
Are these the means of virtue? Muffled treason
Is not of virtue's colour. Much I fear,
The paths of falsehood, though they lead to justice,
Are not approved of heaven.—Yet, in this cause,
Arassid bids me strike! I vowed revenge
Upon Arassid's grave. The pride of right
Rose in my bosom, when the general voice
Called for the aid of Heli to revenge him.
I know not what;—there are some great events
Beyond the search of cool deliberate reason;
Bewildered as I am amidst the toils
Of fateful peril, I would hush its voice.—
Ha! Zeyda here! She comes to speak her wrongs,
And plead for vengeance too!

Enter ZEYDA.

Zey. Heli alone! No slave to hear the voice
Of injured Zeyda! yet within these walls
Must Zeyda speak by stealth? She will not long;
Indignant pride will burst the chains of fear,
And tell this tyrant, 'midst his marshalled guards,
All that my rage can dictate. But from thee,
My silence learned a motive,—'tis revenge.
I come, the monitress of slow resolves:
Mine is the birthright of my country's wrongs;
And mine, the challenge of a brother's murder.

Heli. They have not been forgotten.

Zey. Oh, they cannot,
They cannot be forgotten. Faith and manhood
Would blush to think they should. For three long months
Has Tunis bowed to Barbarossa's power,
Whom Heli knew a murderer.

Heli. Spare thy censure;
The soul of Heli has been often wrung
To think of that. To quit Arassid's wrongs,
He blots his age with treason to his master.

Zey. Treason to him is virtue.

Heli. To the sons

Of blind ambition, such distinctions heal
The wounds of conscience; mine can feel it here
Beneath their cover: Barbarossa trusts me.

Zey. Yes, for a while: His power in Tunis yet
Unstable on its base; when that is fixed,
The pillars that support it now will fall,
And crumble into dust. The tyrant's soul
Must hold antipathy to worth like thine;
While Hassan's envy hovers o'er its prey,
And waits the first occasion to destroy thee.

Heli. I know his hatred. Malice and revenge
Dwell in his savage bosom uncontrouled,
And they have marked me; for my honest heart
Disdained alliance with so foul a villain,
And, when he would have soothed me with his friendship,
Indignant rose, and spurned it proudly from me.
I still remembered when his barbarous insult
Doomed me to lasting chains, to toil for life,
Bound to an oar in Barbarossa's galley.—
The story is a long one.

Zey. Tell it, Heli.
The tale of wrongs, of infamy, of woe,
Is but the unfolding of my tortured thoughts,
That whisper it is mine.

Heli. Of woe, indeed,
Is Heli's tale. Oh, what a heart was his,
To nurse its memory through revolving years,
And yet beat healthful still!—Unspotted souls!
My wife! my daughter! thou whose infant softness
The bursting billows cradled! call'st thou hence,
With beckoning smiles, from yonder fields of light,
The hoary, desolate, and friendless Heli?—
Forgive an old man's tears.

Zey. Tell me their cause,
And mine shall mingle with them.

Heli. Eighteen years
Have thinned these locks, since I was blessed indeed;
Oh, too much blessed! Unwelcome thoughts, that paint
The fleeting shadows of my former comforts,
Away! ye tear my soul! One fateful hour
Snatched them at once, and left me dark and wretched.
I need not tell each circumstance of sorrow;
Know'st thou a father's or a husband's love?—
A wife, the pattern of unsullied faith;
A child, the loveliest babe that ever smiled
In angel-innocence,—down, down my heart!—
One treacherous vessel held. Here, on the coast
Of Afric, to the sea's unpitying roar,

I saw that treasure cast; and, basely fond
Of miserable life, when from their arms
The surge had torn me, on a shattered plank
Preserved a being to be dragged in woe.

Zey. An infant daughter! Ha!—But end thy tale.

Heli. All night I floated on this slender bark.
The morning came, and Barbarossa's galley
Received me from the waves; but Hassan's eye,
Which ne'er did pity melt, beheld, unmoved,
The wringings of my heart. Some trifling jewels,
That chance had let me keep, the villain plundered,
And chained me with his slaves. His master saw it,
And shared the inhuman spoil. But kinder heaven
Restored me freedom. By a Christian galley
Attacked and boarded, with reluctant trust
They gave me arms; and, mindless of my wrongs,
I fought with reckless valour on their side.
We conquered; my reward was liberty;
And since has Barbarossa tried to win me
With confidence and favour.

Zey. I have heard thee
With more than common wonder.—Eighteen years?
Here on the coast of Afric?

Heli. Why those questions?

Zey. Look on this bracelet.

[*Shewing him a Bracelet.*

Heli. Oh, eternal powers!
Art thou my daughter?

Zey. No; but she whose arms
Those pearls circled.

Heli. Oh, she was, she was!—
See here the fellow of that faithful witness!

[*Shewing another.*

About her little wrist her mother tied
That father's present.—Prophet of the faithful!
Say, does she live? Thou can'st not say she lives?

Zey. She does indeed; but wretched are her days.

Heli. Tell me, that I may fly to her relief!—
Let me but see her, clasp her in these arms,
And pour a father's soul in transports o'er her!

Zey. This bracelet was the gift of early friendship;
The gift of—Zulima.

Heli. Ha! Zulima!
His wife!

Zey. The tyrant's wife.—Why dost thou pause?

Heli. Mysterious fate! A thousand thoughts are pressing
Upon my heart.

Zey. Arassid was thy friend;

Lord of thy daughter's vows. This monster came,
This cursed assassin reeking in his blood,
And, with unblushing falsehood, stole the hand
His villany had widowed.

Heli. Let me find her!
My wounded heart would lean upon her love,
Seek its lost peace, with big luxurious throbbings,
Forget its woes, and wonder at its bliss.

Zey. Come, then, and see this daughter; see her sunk
Low on the ground, and torn with speechless anguish!
And if thy nature should forget its own,
Think of her wrongs, and, if thou can'st, forgive them.

Enter SULADDIN.

Heli. Suladdin!

Sul. Heli, Barbarossa orders,
That none, except the attendants on her person,
Shall have access to Zulima.

Heli. What, none!
Know you the princess?

Sul. There was no exception:
My charge was general.

Heli. This looks suspicion.
Heard you the cause?

Sul. You know a soldier's duty;
I asked for none. Yet I am Heli's friend,
And would go somewhat past the line of prudence
To do him service. I would have thee watchful.
If I am not deceived in my conjecture,
Distrust is on thy steps, and they are marked
With looks, that carry danger.

Heli. I am cautioned.
I thank thee for the kindness of thy fear;
But whence arose it?

Sul. When the Turkish envoy
I led to Barbarossa, chance detained me
A while within the palace, near the chamber
Where they were met. I could distinctly hear
The voice of Hassan name thee in a tone
(For Hassan too was there) remote from kindness,
And league it with the sound of traitor.—Thee too
They mentioned, lady: but I am not perfect
In my suspicions.

Zey. Let them speak of Zeyda!
It is the curse of tyrants to be stung
With jealous fear. It daunts not me, Suladdin,
The dagger reddened with my kindred blood.

Heli. No more of that.—Accept our thanks, Suladdin.

Some darker soul hath clouded Barbarossa's;
But time shall undeceive him.

Sul. You were sought.
The Sultan's envoy, as he passed my guard,
Inquired for Heli. But beware of him;
He means, if I o'erheard him right, to search thee
For ground of accusation 'gainst thyself.
Perhaps I speak too much; but I have known thee
For truth and virtue, and I trust thee freely.

Heli. Thou mayst with safety. Has this Turk a name?

Sul. His name is Zatma.

Heli. Zatma! It is well.
He shall not find me.

Sul. I must leave you now;
'Tis near the time when Hassan walks his round.
Let me again remind you to be secret.

Heli. Hold me your friend; nor think so meanly of me:
The time may come when Heli can repay
Your confidence. Farewell. [*Exit* SULADDIN.
'Tis as it should be now. The lot is cast,
And in some little hours, the fate of Tunis
Shall stand determined! Hassan's subtilty
May trace the covert; but he meets, ere long,

Lions, that rouse without the hunter's call.

Zey. 'Tis bravely spoken! On this point you stand:
Not to go forward, when the gulf behind
Is yawning with destruction, were the weakness
Of a poor trembling coward.

Heli. So it were.
This dread arbitrement is only left me.

Zey. My prayers shall aid thee; but I fear me, Heli,
The craft of treacherous Hassan will prevent
Thy brave revenge.

Heli. Before his blow descends,
The chiefs of Tunis strike. Now they are met,
I go to join them. Zulima is here,
My long-lost daughter, and a parent's heart
Swells in this breast to meet her,—but in vain.
Perhaps, amidst the deathful chance of war,
Some sword may reach it. There's a coward thought,
That wooes me back to life!—to see my child!—
To press one parting kiss upon her lips!—
Oh! this were much! But yet, if thou survivest,
With this memorial of another parent,
[*Giving her the Bracelet.*
Carry a father's latest blessing to her,
And tell her,—But I would not melt my soul

Beneath a warrior's temper. Fare thee well.
When thou shalt hear the clash of meeting swords,
And the still air of midnight rudely broken
With clanging trumpets, and the shouts of war,
Then think on Heli; for thy brother's wrongs,
And thine, he fights. He makes no prayer for life.
If he must fall, he falls among the brave.—
But guide him, Prophet, as becomes a soldier,
To fight with justice, and to fall with glory!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE—*The Apartment of* ZULIMA.

Enter ZULIMA *with an Attendant, to whom she delivers a Cup.*

Zul. THIS, then, to Barbarossa;—'tis the gift
Of faithful love! What of the draught remains,
Tell him, from her, that Zulima will drain,
Even to its latest drop.— [*Exit Attendant.*
He drinks! he dies!
Methinks I see him quivering in the pangs
Yon poisoned beverage gives!—Ha! do I tremble?
The purposes of horror should be driven
On burning wheels, beyond reflection's reach!—
Ye ministers of vengeance! Ye who ride
On tempests' wings, and point the lightnings' spear!
Who split the bosom of the trembling earth!
Or from the phials of offended Heaven
Pour its black venom on the deathful gale!

Inspire my soul with unrelenting rage,
And chase the busy fears, that rise upon me!
They tell me, 'tis a dreadful thing to die!
They whisper guilt and murder!—Ha! no more!
Is it not treason to my slaughtered love?
Away! ye tremblings of a woman's heart.
I come! I come, Arassid! if thy soul
Yet lingers for revenge, receive it now,
An offering from the hands of Zulima.—

Some one behind the Scenes.

My love, where art thou?—Hist! my Zulima.

Zul. Angels of mercy guard me! was not that
Arassid's voice? If, from the realms of bliss,
Thou hear'st the wretched Zulima,—protect me,
Ye blessed powers! Arassid! [*She faints.*]

Enter ZATMA, *who runs to support her.*

My Zulima!—Distraction! Speak! She breathes!
She breathes again!—'Tis thy Arassid calls thee!

Zul. Oh! faithful Prophet, are we not in heaven?
The drug was speedy! How the tyrant grinned!
These are the bowers of bliss!

Arass. Oh! speak not thus.
Hear me, my love!

Zul. Arassid!

Aras. Yes, 'tis he;
'Tis he himself.

Zul. But my Arassid's dead,
Murdered by—Ha!—stop there, and 'scape from madness!

Aras. Calm thy vexed soul, and look upon Arassid.
Heaven has preserved his life to love and thee.

Zul. He lives! he lives! or has my brain been racked,
Till reason left her seat?

Aras. No; let me hold thee
Thus to my heart, and tell thee that I live!
This one embrace repays my sorrows past,
And throws oblivion on my days of bondage.
Hast thou not much to ask? Then hear it all.—

Zul. First let me gaze upon thee! strain my eye-strings
With making greedy comments on thy look,
And riot on remembrance! Yes, he lives!—
I do not dream; he lives!—By what blessed power
Of wonders do you live?

Aras. Even at the Porte
I found one honest man. The treacherous vizir
Had doomed me to destruction; smiled, and doomed me.

With much pretended friendship to my cause,
He trained me to the palace. With a prison,
A gilded prison, and a guard of mutes,
He honoured, as he said, the prince of Tunis.
My own attendants vanished by degrees;
And Barbarossa—start not—yes, the fiend,
Who now is lord of Tunis, was commissioned
To buy its sceptre with Arassid's blood.
But my good genius linked the villain's scheme
With one of whiter soul, the virtuous Mirza.
He was the keeper of this helpless prey
Their nets had 'tangled. He would hear me tell
The story of my wrongs, and weep to hear them.
He pitied, loved, and saved me.

Zul. Blessings on him!
The blessings of the wretched reach to heaven.

Aras. He was the wretch's friend: with guiltless falsehood
Deceived them with a story of my murder;
Pretended rites of burial to my corse;
And counterfeited truth so well with semblance,
That not a doubt arose. Clad like a slave,
I wrought in Mirza's garden. But the life,
His generous care preserved, grew hateful now,
Banished from bliss and thee. Nor yet alone

Did absence give it torture; Barbarossa,
But half content with empire, sought for love,
The love of Zulima.

Zul. Speak not of that!
The theme is dreadful: press it not upon me;
It leads to desperation!

Aras. No; it shall not.
When at the Porte, the sullen pride, that waits
Upon misfortune, bade me not be seen
To many eyes, to Barbarossa's never.
Nor do his followers know me, one except,
Whose soul is honest 'midst surrounding villains,
Is gentle 'midst the ruffian band he leads.
Hence, by another venial artifice,
Passed on the Sultan for a friend of Mirza's,
I come his chosen messenger to Afric,
And Barbarossa trusts me. Is it base
To deal in fraud thus? For methinks the prince
Of injured Tunis should have walked in light;
Armed with the swelling sense of all his wrongs,
Called this usurper forth, and claimed revenge.
Am I a coward? 'tis for thee, my love;
For thee, disguised beneath another's name,
I win this golden interview by stealth,
To whisper out my vows.

Zul. You must not love me—

Aras. Not love thee!

Zul. No; you must not, nor forgive me:
No; hate me, throw me from thee. Yet, methinks,
I would not have you hate me.

Aras. Hate thee! Heavens!

Zul. Thou canst not think how basely I am fallen!
Have I no mark of ugliness about me,
To shew how vile I am?

Aras. Oh! thou art lovely
Beyond the dreams of heaven!

Zul. It cannot be.
I am not what I was: the serpent's touch
Has turned this flower to poison. Barbarossa—

Aras. Ha! what of him? He durst not, sure he durst not—
Curse on the monster! did he wrong thy honour?

Zul. He did not; but—myself have wronged it vilely—
I am his wife.

Aras. His wife!

Zul. This fatal morn,
I vowed myself his wife.

Aras. My Zulima!

Zul. If thou hast pity, change that tender look;
It tears my heart. Detest me as you ought.

Aras. Detest thee! No; the dreadful truth appears,
And rushes on my mind. The villain's art
At last prevailed, and my pretended death—

Zul. Oh! seek not to excuse me; I must hide,
Where the hot blush shall burn my cheek no more.
Ere the next sun shall Zulima be low,
And lose her woes, her weakness, in the grave.
The malice of her fate shall chase no longer:
Even thou mayest weep, and half forget to blame
The violated faith of her you loved.

[*Shout at a distance.*

Hark! 'twas the shout of war! Oh! leave a wretch,
Whose presence is infectious with misfortune.

[*Shout again.*

Again! Oh heavens!

Aras. I cannot leave you thus:
And yet—my heart is bounding at the thought
Of gallant strife.—My sister!

Enter ZEYDA.

Zey. What art thou,
That crossest Zeyda in Arassid's form?
Speak! I conjure thee.

Aras. 'Tis Arassid's self.
Forbear thy wonder; for the tale's too long
At such a time. Whence that tumultuous joy,
That glowed on Zeyda's cheek?
Zey. First let me clasp thee,
Thus, to a sister's heart! There wanted this
To close the wonders of an hour so blessed.
He lives! he lives! for him the chiefs of Tunis
Have fought, and conquered.
Aras. and Sul. Ha!
Zey. I saw them drive
The tyrant from these walls; and in the front
The valiant Heli, shouting o'er the dead,
Bearing the head of Hassan for a standard,
Resistless, pour his conquering bands along.
Zul. Oh! noble Heli!
Aras. Have I found him here?
My friend again!
Zey. Oh! he is more than friend.
Knowest thou this bracelet? [*To* ZULIMA.
Zul. Ah! too well I know it;
The earliest comrade of my infant woe.
Zey. Look on its twin, [*Shewing another,*] and know
that this was Heli's:
The dear remembrance of a daughter lost,

Whose arm that other circled.

Zul. Gracious Powers!

My head grows dizzy with the tale of wonder.

Then Heli—

Zey. Is thy father.

Aras. Ha! her father!

Zul. Spare me, ye swelling transports! Yet I feel,

There is an icy weight upon my heart,

That will not let it rise! Arassid! Zeyda!

Save me; the tide of fate is rushing on me.

I know not what!—Wildered I am, and weak.

Methought I should have slept, and been forgotten.

This, like some strange and busy dream, hath waked me,

Panting amidst its bustle.

Aras. Fear not, my love!

Sure there are days of bliss reserved in heaven,

For virtue such as thine.

Zey. But see, thy father!

Enter HELI.

Heli. How my heart springs to meet a daughter's grasp. [*Embracing her.*]

Oh! let me gaze upon thee, trace the features

Of my lost infant, of her mother lost!

Zul. I cannot speak. My father!

Zey. Speech is poor.
Let Heli's silent wonder close the scene,
By looking on Arassid.

Heli. Holy Prophet!
Arassid living!

Aras. Yes; he lives to thank thee.
Thus let him clasp the friend of his misfortunes!
[*Embracing him.*
Deceived by Mirza, when you wept my death,
Heaven saw your tears, and blessed them.

Heli. It has blessed me
To-night indeed. And have we fought for thee?
We should have better fought; and yet my followers
Did bravely too.

Aras. Tell me, my gallant friend,
That I may feel the gratitude I owe them.

Heli. I will; though there's a faintness hangs about me,
That should be absent now. My brave associates
Had drawn their troops, in secret, near the palace;
And chance had placed some veterans of my band
In posts within it. Barbarossa called me.
He sat, with Hassan standing at his side,
And some few guards around them. With a smile,

A smooth deceitful smile, he bade me welcome.
Upon a table stood his marriage-cup,
Filled with its spicy draught. "Heli," he said,
"This is the gift of Zulima. In token
Of trust and friendship for thy service past,
To thee this nuptial beverage I assign.
Drink to my fair one's fortune." I obeyed;
But, as I drank—

Zul. Drank! said'st thou?—
'Tis past; and not a blacker curse remains
In yonder heavens.

Heli. Support her; I grow faint.
Why dost thou rivet thus thine eyes upon me,
My Zulima? they wring thy father's heart.

Zul. That cup!—Is there no friendly hand to stab me?
It should be spoken only with the breath
Of dying pangs!—That cup thy daughter poisoned!

Aras. and Zey. Poisoned!

Heli. Nay, look not thus amazed, my friends.
Dear to thy father still.—[*To* ZULIMA.] 'Twas rash—
No more—
I feel it sting. Methinks, I should have lived
A little longer, 'midst my new-found joys.
My friend! my daughter!—Yet I thank thee, Allah!

I could not die more blessed.

Enter a Soldier.

Sol. Fly! Heli, fly! Destruction's on thy steps.
As Barbarossa, by thy troops pursued,
Fled to the port, upon the instant landed
The Turkish gallies: fresh, and warm for battle,
Their soldiers poured to Barbarossa's aid,
And made resistance vain. The chiefs of Tunis
Have fallen bravely. Alid, with a few
Remaining forces, guards the palace-gate
Some moments, till you 'scape.

Heli. I shall not 'scape.
He triumphs now. This is my resting place.
[*Falling.*

Zul. And where is mine?
Shrinks not the earth from parricide and me!

Aras. A few remaining forces guard the gate.
There will Arassid fall. [*Going out.*

Heli. Stay, I conjure thee.
Look on my daughter. Thou didst love her once;
Support her now.

Aras. Yes, I'm a coward there.

Zey. A woman's voice may stop him in his course,
Some feeble pity if his bosom hold,

And I may touch it.—Soldier, to the gate.

[*Exit* ZEYDA, *with the Soldier.*

Zul. [*Kneeling behind* HELI, *and supporting him.*]
Canst thou yet bear this most unhallowed touch?

Heli. Oh! it is sweeter to my parting soul
Than hymns of angels!—would these torments let me—
Ruler of heaven, thou seest no common tears
Upon these shrivelled cheeks! Oh! let the pangs,
That wring them from me, cover from thy wrath
One hapless daughter! Oh! my heart's on fire!
But—it can bless thee still. Alas! my child,
To what dread perils—Prophet of the faithful,
Hear'st thou an old man's prayer, that gasps to make it!
Protect, and—Oh!— [*Dies.*

Zul. No: let me curse; and, if the thunder sleeps,
Awake its hottest bolt, and call it here!—
I am not mad; I know I am not mad!
This old man was my father!—Murdered! murdered! [*Throwing herself on the Body of her Father.*

Aras. Hear me, my love! The dreadful scene o'erpowers thee.
This signet yet commands the means of flight.

Zul. I will not fly. Have not those lips a voice,

Cold as they are, and black with deathful poison?
How my brain burns!—Look there!—my father's
shade!
See how he waves me with his bloodless hand!
He shakes his hoary locks!—Again he beckons!—
Thus I obey the summons. [*Stabs herself.*

Aras. What hast thou done!

Zul. I know not what—my head grows wondrous
dizzy!—
Support me, my Arassid.—Thou pale corse!
My murdered father!—But let this atone,
This pang that grasps my heart, and—Oh! Arassid—
[*Dies.*

Aras. And dost thou call Arassid?—
[*A shout is heard.*
Hark! they come!— [*Shout on the other side.*
Again!—Encompassed!—but they shout in vain;
Despair shall 'scape them; for Despair can die.
[*Exit hastily.*

Enter, with their Swords drawn, BARBAROSSA, *and Attendants.*

Bar. [*In entering.*] Save him, I charge you, save
him! By our Prophet,
Who strikes Arassid dies! Angels of death,

My Zulima!—if yet a breath remains—

[*Dropping his Sword, and throwing himself down by* ZULIMA.

Curse on my conquest!—Lifeless, pale, and cold!—
Such are the triumphs of this ruthless arm!

Enter SULADDIN *hastily.*

Sul. Alas! my lord, Arassid—

Bar. What of him?

Say, that he lives, and half absolve my crimes.

Sul. He lives no more! Vain was your charge of mercy.

With desperate fury on the Turkish band
Headlong he rushed, and from a stranger's sword
Provoked the death he sought.

Bar. Arassid too!

Murder and I shake hands. Avaunt, and leave me.

[*To his Attendants.*

Slaves, can ye chase this vulture from my heart?—
Ha! I may yet appease it. [*Snatching up the Dagger.*

Sul. [*Preventing him.*] Good, my lord,
Let me intreat you.

Bar. 'Twas that demon Hassan—
Tear him in pieces! See the villain writhes
On Heli's sword!—Hell! hell! thy fires are cold

For such a deed!—But, soft! Arassid lives!—
Did she not say, he lived!—Hush!—where is Zeyda?
Let her be treated kindly.—Give me room
To breathe this fever off.—I'd give a kingdom
To hear her say, he lived!—
This is my wedding night!—Where is her chamber?
Lead me to Zulima.—
What! with these bloody hands?—No more of that!
I'll muffle them in night.—Away! away! [*Exit.*

Sul. [*To the Attendants.*] Attend your master. I will use his power
To smooth the swelling, which this storm has left.
Let him be quiet. [*Exeunt Attendants.*
Sleep'st thou, lovely maid?
Peace to thy memory!—Hapless chief, farewell.
More wretched far is he, whose conquering sword
Hath triumphed now in Tunis. Keen remorse
Preys on his life, nor aught that power can boast
Avails to soothe it. May I die like you;
And thus some heart, by truth, by nature wrung,
Shed the warm drops of pity on my bier!

EPILOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MRS WESTON.

WELL, I protest, there's no such thing as dealing
With these starch poets, with these—Men of Feeling!
Said I, Your tragedy is fairly over,
And Zulima lies buried with her lover.
I hope your Muse's power extends no further,
Than poisoned bowls, and daggers drenched with murther.
Now she has laid her heroes to their rest,
She'll leave to us our epilogue and jest.
"Your epilogue," said he; "Oh! bane of sense!
Blot to the stage, and feeling's worst offence!
Where Pity's soft luxurious tear should flow,
Should Passion warm, should conscious Virtue glow;
This child, of Folly and of Fashion born,
Laughs every nobler sentiment to scorn.
The poet's nature, and the player's art,
Chased by her voice, forsake the swelling heart;
And where had Fancy formed her visions fair,
This grinning idiot reigns unrivalled there."

More had he said; but here I cut him short,
And came to you to crave your sanction for't.
What say ye? Shall they bring their plays in vogue,
Without the smart facetious epilogue?
And when their fuss of tragic woe is done,
Screw up their mouths, and grudge our bit of fun?
When we have dried the tears, that Pity shed,
Shall we not take the living for the dead?
And, when we tire through ancient times to roam,
Hear something clever of the times at home?
And, though these grave ones say, 'tis out of season,
There's precedent enough to give it reason.
But, hush! he frowns, and beckons me away.—
Farewell! You'll laugh with me some other day.

THE

SPANISH FATHER.

A TRAGEDY.

THE idea of this tragedy was taken from that passage in the history of Spain, which relates to the invasion of the Moors, assisted, it is said, by Count Julian, whose daughter the Spanish monarch had seduced.

Garrick saw this play, and I had some conversation with him, when accidentally in London in 1775, on the subject. Among other doubts, as to its success in representation, he stated, as the strongest, that which arose from the nature of the catastrophe, which he thought too horrid for the stage.

The character which most impressed itself on my imagination in writing this drama, was that of Alphonzo. In the enthusiasm natural to youth, I had conceived it standing on the high ground of heroic virtue and ho-

nour, fierce and implacable in vindication of those principles, yet open to that humanity and tender feeling, which I had perceived frequently to belong to minds of that description. Such a character, in unskilful hands, is sometimes apt to develope itself in bombastic expression. There was a good deal of such expression in the first copy of this play, which, even at that time, I had taste enough to be sensible of. I find several passages of that sort, in the scroll now before me, which, though they possessed some poetical beauty, I had struck out, as going beyond the simplicity of nature, and the style appropriate to the situation. Some perhaps still remain open to censure on this score.—But I again find, that I am talking of myself. Yet, if there are, in these little notes, in which I venture to speak in my own person, any expressions that seem to savour of conceit or self-importance, let it be believed, that they have unwittingly escaped me, and are, in truth, very foreign from the tone of my mind at this moment. In these little notices, methinks, I am holding a sort of valedictory intercourse with my readers; and my real feelings are such as become my age and situation—those of humility and tenderness,

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

RODRIGUEZ, *King of Spain.*
ALVAREZ, *his favourite Minister.*
ALPHONZO, SAVEDRA, } *noble Spaniards.*
PEREZ.
PEDRO.

RUZALLA, *Daughter of Alphonzo.*
ALMEYDA, *Friend and Companion of Ruzalla.*
ELVIRA, *an Attendant on Ruzalla.*
Officer, Guards, &c.

The Scene, during the first Act, lies at a Seat belonging to Alphonzo, near Toledo; during the rest of the Play, at Toledo.

THE

SPANISH FATHER.

ACT I.

SCENE—*The Fields, with a distant View of an antique Castle.*

PEREZ *and* SAVEDRA.

Per. YET once again, Savedra, let me give thee
A soldier's welcome to his native land.

Sav. I thank thee, from my soul. The common perils
We passed together, make this greeting warm.
How fares our noble chief, the brave Alphonzo?

Per. Even as the warrior should, whose days of danger
Have necked his age in honours hardly purchased.
Scarce hath an hour elapsed since here, in safety,
He reached the ancient dwelling of his fathers.
You wy'd turrets, beetling o'er the cliff,
Mark the rude grandeur of his warlike race.

Sar. Conduct my steps to find him.

Per. From the castle,
His lovely daughter hither led our search:
For, ere we reached it, she forsook her chamber,
To taste the freshness of the breathing morn.
He left me here, and with an anxious haste
Pursues her steps.

Sar. When from my country's shore
Its service called me, she was scarcely past
The years of childhood; but Ruzalla's name
Hath often reached me.

Per. 'Tis a sound, that carries
Health to my frame; mine age hath pleasure in't.
As yet a boy, when fortune left me friendless,
His father took, and placed me near Alphonzo.
Our ages were alike, our tempers suited.
Perhaps I owed dependence; but too noble
To claim returns so mean, he gave me friendship,

And ever since we have been linked as brothers.
In war's worst danger, have we stood abreast,
And, midst the good or ill of private life,
Our joys and griefs were common. I have seen
His two brave sons, in valour's glorious cause,
Untimely fall together. Of his children,
This darling daughter now alone remains,
And such this daughter as Alphonzo merits.
Her beauty charms all eyes; but that were little:
Compassion, sweetness, every tender grace
That melts in woman, these adorn Ruzalla.
Yet common observation gives its judgment
Short of her worth; for she is formed so gentle,
That she doth put her very virtues forth,
Like buds i'the spring, with fearful modesty.

Sav. I marvel much, that qualities so rare
Should not have sounded louder on the tongue
Of praise or envy.

Per. She has 'scaped them both.
Here has she grown beneath a parent's eye,
Unsoiled by common notice; here Alphonzo
Throws off the rugged war, and smooths his soul
To all the soft affections of a father:
For seldom is he seen to haunt the city,
Or list him in the train of smiling courtiers;

His virtues are not made for scenes like those.

Sav. I have not been a lacquey of the court
When braver business called me; but report
Speaks doubly of the king. It speaks him open,
Generous, and brave; but rash and unrestrained
In passion's or in pleasure's warm career.
His favourite minister, the lord Alvarez,
Whose fiery spirit in the cause of pleasure,
From early youth, had mated with the king's,
Is said to mould his master to his will.

Per. 'Tis as thou say'st. Impetuous as he is,
The youthful sovereign does but play a part,
Which this man dictates; like the fabled god,
Ruler of storms, even in its wildest course,
He bends the monarch's passion as he lists.

Sav. And brooks Alphonzo well this minion's sway?

Per. Be sure he does not. Who in Spain, that loves
His country, can? Besides the general hate,
He held in early scorn the proud Alvarez,
For that his name, by favour only graced,
Bears not the stamp of generous ancestry;
And 'tis a weakness, you might note in him,
To fasten an hereditary claim

From noble lineage to a noble mind.
Sav. I have observed it.
Per. 'Tis most open in him.
Last of a long-ennobled race, that yields,
And scarcely yields, to royalty alone,
The purity and honour of his blood
Bear not the least impeachment unrevenged.
Though, in the gentle bearings of his nature,
Most gracious to his friends, and to the man
Whom fate hath placed below him, or whom fortune
Hath tried with sorrows, mild and piteous;
Touch but this tender part, his family's honour,
And not the tygress, when her foaming chaps
Grind on the hunter's spear, hath deadlier fury.
Sav. Though he is somewhat sparing of complaint,
Nor lets his great soul waste itself in words,
Yet have I marked him feel his services
But ill repaid. The conquest Afric witnessed,
Has Spain forgot?
Per. Perhaps her monarch did;
Alphonzo's haughty spirit never stoops
To make the time his friend: warm in the right,
The voice of custom, or the rod of power,
He equally disdains to court or fear.
Hence, in the obsequious region of the palace,

He is not always welcome.—But he comes.

Enter ALPHONZO.

Alph. [*To* SAVEDRA.] Thus let me clasp my soldier! [*Embracing him.*] Thou hast speeded
Beyond the steps of age, and overta'en me
Somewhat before my hopes.

Sav. The storm, that bore
Your vessel from its course, our voyage missed,
And gave us vantage.

Alph. 'Twas indeed a fierce one.
But dangers past will serve to furnish out
An old man's talk. Thou seest me now returned,
My term of service out, to claim from Spain
Some days of quiet, and a peaceful grave.
But I have placed Savedra in my post,
To turn the tide of battle from her shore,
And more than fill the void my age hath left.

Sav. If Spain shall mark Savedra's deeds with praise,
'Twill be to think of him to whom she owes them.
Alphonzo's battles taught him how to fight;
Alphonzo's battles taught him how to conquer.

Alph. Of that no more. But I have much to ask;—
First of my fellow-soldiers.

Sav. On the coast
Of bleeding Afric, as your orders bore,
I left the troops commanded by Francisco.
The rest with me returned to find at home
Their country's recompence, for ten years service.
Before I left them, in our little camp
Had mirth and festival begun to reign.
Forth from their villages, with eager looks,
The wife, the children of the veteran, came
To meet a husband's and a father's smile;
While joyous bands, with rural minstrelsy,
Danced round our tents, or chorus'd loud and long
The ancient roundelay.

Alph. Blessed be their joys!
A soldier buys them dear, and feels them warmly.
Alphonzo should have shared the jocund scene,
But that his sovereign's mandate called him thence.
Ere noon, I must attend him at Toledo;
The time between I steal from state and business,
To look upon my haunts of early youth,
Here, in the well-known fields, and meet my child
With nature smiling round her.

Sav. Fair Ruzalla
Is well, I hope?

Alph. I have not seen her yet.

Alph. My Ruzalla! let me press thee
Thus to my heart, and weep its fondness o'er thee!
Even in the battle's front I thought on thee;
Midst all the hardships of a soldier's life,
The image of my darling crossed my fancy,
And smiled their force away. Oh! tell me, tell me,
All that my absence missed!—I cannot question—
This throbbing here—Thou hast been well, and happy:
Hast not, my love?

Ruz. Tranquillity and peace
Dwell in my native groves, nor e'er beyond
I strayed to lose them.

Alph. That was well.—Thou sighest;
But woman's very joy should still be tender,
As if it twinned with sorrow. We shall part
No more, my child; Alphonzo's toils are past;
Here shall he rest, his course of glory run,
And give his closing days to heaven and thee.

Ruz. And shall we be so happy? Oh! my father!

Alph. Ay; wherefore should we not?

Ruz. I know not why.
To see thy safe return, to meet thee thus,
Has been Ruzalla's prayer. Yet now, methinks,
There is an ugly boding at my heart,

That weighs it down.

Alph. Think not so deeply on't.
'Tis not in augury to trouble virtue.

Ruz. Oh! teach my feebler mind the strength of virtue.
You know not how much weakness hangs about me;
How little I am worthy of the fate,
That gave me birth from such a sire as thou art.

Alph. I will not think so; be it thy father's praise,
That he has better taught thee. There are fathers,
Who treat their daughters, as if nature formed them
In some inferior mould, fit to obey,
But not to judge; to learn, if they have beauty,
The little arts, that teach them how to charm;
Or, if they want it, in domestic office
To creep this life, and aim at nothing further.
But thou hast learned the mind's exalted purpose,
To feel its powers divine, of thought and reason,
And use them as the immortal gifts of Heaven.

Ruz. Such have the lessons of a parent been.
I owe him more than nature's common debt,
And more than common duty should repay him.
Heaven knows—but feeling is not eloquent—
Silence shall better thank you.

Alph. 'Tis enough.

I know thy love, my child, the only good
That I would husband life for. My brave boys
Fell ere their time, but fell in glory's lap;
And other fathers envied me their fall.
It was a soldier's.—All may do their duty,
But 'tis a privilege, not all enjoy,
To die in doing it.

Ruz. Should not Ruzalla
Then comfort thee for all? Oh! that she could!

Alph. I know thou wilt, my child. Here have I seen thee
Grow up and flourish, with the sweets of nature,
To bless thy father's eye, and glad his heart.
But now the world expects thee; and thy virtues
Shall shew thee worthy of thy father's name.
To-day I lead thee to Rodriguez' court,

Ruz. Rodriguez!

Alph. Wherefore startst thou at the sound?

Ruz. Did I?

Alph. Why, yes; but know, Alphonzo's race
May look on kings unmoved. Thy gallant fathers
Fought in their cause, and propped their trembling throne.
Thither I lead thee, in the hand that struck
Embattled Afric on her burning plains.

Forgive an old man's boasting—thou art his pride too;
His fond exulting heart anticipates
The praise and wonder of his friends around thee.
Ruz. Oh! I deserve not praise; indeed I do not.
I would shrink back, and hide from public notice,
Within thy arms, if there thou wilt receive me,
With all my errors, all my imperfections.
Alph. This modesty becomes thee; yet the suffrage
Of worth and virtue may be fairly wished for.
There is indeed a shallow talking race,
Insects the sun of royal favour breeds,
Whose flattery you will hold but words of fashion,
Which courtesy must hear, but sense despise.
Allow them the observance of civility,
But not an eye of favour; even the freedom,
That innocence might take, must be denied them,
For busy tongues might talk on't; and in woman,
The sense of right should ever go beyond
The right itself. Methinks my cautions wrong thee;
But thou'rt the treasure of thy father's age,
And, like the miser trembling o'er his hoard,
He fears, he knows not why.
Ruz. Oh! speak not thus,

Nor add to all those debts of past indulgence,
That make a wretched bankrupt of Ruzalla.

Alph. My two brave boys have fallen for their country—
Peace to their souls! for I have heard their fame.
Thou, my Ruzalla, art the single ray,
That gilds the evening of thy father's age.
Could'st thou but know how dear this bosom holds thee—
Thou canst not, till thy heart has felt the throb
A parent's feels!—Wipe off that falling tear.
Amidst the gentleness that suits her sex,
Even soft-eyed woman has a proper pride.
Revere thyself—the daughter of Alphonzo.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE,—*A Garden belonging to the Royal Palace at Toledo.*

RUZALLA *and* ALMEYDA.

Ruz. Forgive my weakness, call me not unkind,
If 'midst the joy of meeting my Almeyda,
An inauspicious tear should force its way.
Thou knowest not how much cause I have to weep.

Alm. And should not thy Almeyda know the cause?
Have not our souls, since first they knew themselves,
Been open to each other? is it now,
When most you need a friend, that you deny me
My claim of friendship, friendship to your sorrows?

Ruz. Yes, I've an office for Almeyda's friendship;
To hear my sighs, to see my falling tears,
To listen while I tell her I am wretched:
Yet ask not why I am so. 'Tis some comfort
(Alas, to me denied!) to weep unquestioned.
My guilty sorrow dares not meet the light;

Mine is the task to wear a look of ease,
To talk of common things, to smile at trifles,
While my poor breaking heart is torn with anguish.

Alm. Here then unload thy bosom; to thy friend
The world's unfeeling wisdom is unknown.
She too has weakness, and can pity thine;
Here tell thy griefs, and find a comforter!

Ruz. But shame is mingled with Ruzalla's grief.
Even thou wouldst scorn me, could I dare to tell thee;
For thou art pure, for thou art innocent,
Nor does thy spotless soul admit a thought
So foul as even to guess at my dishonour.

Alm. Dishonour!

Ruz. Yes.
Almeyda's friend, Alphonso's boasted daughter!—
Rodriguez,—but thou can'st not charge Rodriguez;
Curse thy own guilt and folly that undid thee.

Alm. Thy guilt! thy folly!

Ruz. Yes, my throbbing heart
Has kept the dark opprobrious story down,
And struggled with its pangs; but, ere my fate
Shall pluck it thence,—for, oh! my boding soul
Foresees detection blaze its light upon me,—
[*Pausing.*
Wilt thou, my ever faithful, ever loved,

Wilt thou too cast me from thee?
Alm. My Ruzalla,
Thy words distract me! Let thy troubled soul
Be calm again, and know its own Almeyda.
Ruz. I'll tell thee then. When last to Afric's coast,—
But promise not to hate me.
Alm. Speak thy griefs;
Friendship like mine is poor in words to vouch it.
Ruz. When last to Afric's coast my father led
The troops of Spain, he left me at Montverdo.
Thou wilt remember how I wished for thee,
To chear the lonely hours. Had'st thou but known
To what destruction then thy absence gave me,
Scarce had thy duty to a dying parent
Withheld thee from thy friend.
Alm. Destruction, say'st thou!
I left thee to destruction
Ruz. Yes, Almeyda.
But, ah! destruction took an angel's form,
Too pleasing to be feared.—
One fatal day, about my customed hour,
When the mild dawn retired before the sun,
Alone I wandered through the winding wood.
A peaceful silence ruled the scene around,

Save the small murmur of the busy brook,
Answering the ring-dove's dirge. I sat me down
Upon a cowslip bank, and fancy formed
Her dreams at will, when through the rustling shade,
Clad in a hunter's garb, a youth appeared.
Blushing I rose, yet knew not how to fly;
He bowed before me, and with downcast looks,
And chastened voice, intreated my forgiveness;
Told me, the chace had led him from his train,
Till through the tangled wood he lost his way,
Unweetingly intrusive.—Oh, my friend,
That stranger was the king.

Alm. The king Rodriguez!

Ruz. Had'st thou but seen him then! His dark brown locks,
Disordered by the chace, curled on his neck;
A modest softness checked his beaming eye,
And smoothed his haughty mien. I looked, and wondered;
He looked like me, and seemed to wonder too.
At last his train appeared; his rank was known;
Towering he stood, and turned on them the king;
But upon me, Almeyda,——

Alm. Ah, I fear
Too fatal that humility.

Ruz. 'Twas ruin!—
I led him to the castle, gave him welcome,
As to Alphonzo's king his daughter should;
His language, too, was only of my father;
But, ah! his eyes were eloquent of me.
We parted; but my fancy kept behind
A too seducing image of Rodriguez;
And often would my treacherous feet betray me
Back to the place where I had seen him first:
There would I conjure up his beauteous form,
And, though I blushed and trembled, almost wish
To see him there again.—I saw him soon.
Back to Montverdo's groves disguised he came;
For, as he told me, he had thrown aside
The garb of king, the pomp of royalty,
Once more to look on nature at Montverdo;
And from ambition's cares, and courtly falsehood,
Had fled to peace, to friendship, and to me.
Vain of the thought, I listened to his words;
And frequent, midst the wild romantic scene,
Far from the world, and pleased to think it far,
We met each other. When he vowed his passion,
Pleased, not alarmed, I heard him; still unthinking
In secret met him; till, in an hour accursed,—

Oh, my Almeyda, all the rest is guilt,
Is infamy!
Alm. Am I awake to hear thee?
My fallen friend!—but I am still thy friend.
Ruz. Oh, I am lost beyond the reach of friendship!
Alm. Fain would I flatter thee, and say thou art not.—
Hast thou not since beheld him?
Ruz. From that day,
Though I have often wept, and wished to see him,
Anguish, remorse, and some surviving sense
Of sullen honour, kept me from his sight;
Till, at the last, my father's near approach
This morning raised my fears above my shame;
And at the wonted hour, and well-known place,
Where oft before we met, I tried to find him.
He was not there, but infamy was there;
The face of nature seemed to sadden round me;
Each silent witness of my former purity
Lowered on my steps, and told me of my crime.
Alm. Thy crime was love to him. If he but knew
The native worth of my Ruzalla's soul,
He would not judge it by a single error.—
I trust he loves thee still.

Ruz. Inhuman sex!
That ruin where they love!
Alm. The power is his
To save thee yet;—to wed thee.
Ruz. Such was once
The hope I fondly cherished; such was once
The hope he gave; but fallen as I am—
Even hateful to myself!—
Alm. Still art thou more,
'Midst all thy wrongs, than common souls can reach.
Merit like thine disdains the aid of birth;
Or, should it borrow lustre thence, thy name
Is such as monarchs might not blush to own.
Rodriguez, fierce and haughty as he is,
Will fear to wrong the daughter of Alphonzo.
Ruz. And should Rodriguez on such terms be mine?
Should I accept the leavings of his fear,
Without his love? No, we are both above it:
He will not give, methinks I would not take,
The hand that was not offered by his heart.—
Protect me, my Almeyda; see, he comes!
Let me not wait his coming. [*Preparing to go.*
Alm. Be thyself; [*Stopping her.*
And meet him, not unworthy of his love.—
I leave thee to the interview. [*Exit* ALMEYDA.

Enter RODRIGUEZ.

Rod. Health to my love, my beautiful Ruzalla!
May joy like that which now Rodriguez feels,
Be ever her's!—Ha! dost thou turn and weep?
What should this mean? why for a tedious week
Have not these eyes beheld thee?—Through the scenes,
Sacred to love and to Ruzalla's steps,
Her fond Rodriguez wandered, but in vain.
She shunned him then; and now his passion meets
With those unhallowed tears.

Ruz. Those tears, my Lord,
Are the sad portion thou hast left Ruzalla.
The joy thou wishest her, the peace of mind
That dwells with innocence, is her's no more!

Rod. That dwells with innocence! and does she tax
A love like ours with guilt!—unkind Ruzalla!
No, it shall bloom in constancy and truth,
Far from the eye of a misjudging world,
And bless us both.

Ruz. Oh, it shall never bless us.
Within this bosom it has quenched the hope
Of future blessing.—Such Rodriguez' love.—

Alas, my Lord! if I were made for chiding,
Then should my wrongs—But I have wronged myself;
I will not charge another.—I have thrown
The peace, the comfort of my soul away.
But thou should'st pity me.

Rod. Should pity thee!
Thou dost profane the heavenly power of beauty,
Of something more than beauty, that dwells in thee,
To talk of pity. I behold thee still,
The idol of my vows, with adoration!

Ruz. Are you sincere, my Lord? Perhaps you are;
For I am little qualified to judge
Of what dissembling is;—but even thy words
Cannot persuade to comfort, nor out-plead
The whisper of that stern-reproving monitor,
That tells me what a wretch I've made myself.

Rod. Such is the softness that adorns thy sex,
Beauteous in weakness, lovely in its fears.—
But, trust me, thine are false.—Cast not upon me
That altered look; within this bosom dwells
Unchanged affection, unextinguished love.
Hear then its voice, that bids thee still be happy.

Rez. Can it restore the happiness I lost? *
Ere it seduced my soul; ere it seduced me
From all the blessed serenity of virtue,
From all the comforts of a parent's love,

* Among the passages struck out, (as I have mentioned in the note at the beginning of this drama,) I find the following speech of Ruzalla; in place of which was substituted the five lines with which the speech is closed as it now stands. The change was undoubtedly a proper one; but the passage thus expunged was of a sort which a young author is unwilling to lose, and, accordingly, in the original copy, it was circumflexed with a query, whether it ought not to be retained.

Give me again the peaceful days I passed
Within my native woods, gay as the birds
That carolled on the boughs; my breast as pure,
As were the fresh and dew-steeped violets
That decked my path. With each returning sun,
Arose the healthful vigour of my soul,
And shed a dawn of chearfulness around me.
Or if I sometimes wept at tales of woe
The busy world gave birth to, yet my sorrow
Was gentle as the soft complaining song
The nightingale addresses to the moon.
But now the smiling morn has lost its beauty,
The woodland music deadens on the breeze,
And the scarce-opening blossom seems to languish.
At times a short oblivion lulls my soul,
But soon I start again to recollection;
And when I weep, my tears are those of guilt,
That carry anguish with them.

From all the honour of his spotless name,
To infamy, to anguish?
Rod. Talk not thus;
Thy scruples wrong us both.—Passion like ours
Bursts the weak ties, the servile forms of custom.
Our souls were joined by sympathetic nature,
And heaven, that lighted up their sacred fires,
Witnessed our vows; the rest is pedantry,
The bond of frozen minds, by chance or interest
Joined, for a life of dulness or disquiet.
Ruz. For shame, my Lord! am I so lost indeed,
That you should treat me thus! This is the loose
Irreverent language of licentious vice.—
I may be most unhappy; I deserve it;
But not so wretched quite as to forget
Those sacred laws that privilege mankind.
Rod. Forgive me, my Ruzalla; by thy beauties
I swear, I meant not disrespect to thee.
Thou art the bride, the queen of my desires.
Look not so sad, though, on my soul, thy tears
Are lovely, even to rapture. Tell me, tell me,
How shall I wipe those tears!
Ruz. Let his own honour
Answer Rodriguez that.
Rod. I understand thee.

Would I could shake from my impatient love
The chains of royalty! Thou knowest a king
Is but a splendid servant of the state;
Not even his son's affections are his own,
But crooked policy must dictate to him,
And warp the dearest wishes of his bosom.

Ruz. So I have heard unfeeling statesmen judge;
But yet, methinks, where monarchs love their people,
Their people would rejoice to see them happy.

Rod. Now, by my throne, I think so. Thou shalt teach
Rodriguez to be blest, and bless his country.
[I will not bear a bargain for my hand
Without my heart.] [*Aside.*
Be satisfied, Ruzalla:
Were I not now a king, I now were thine;
But, as I am, a little time will smooth
Those obstacles, that state and royalty
Impose upon my will.

Ruz. How shall I thank thee?
And yet, I know not why, I blush to say,
That I should thank thee.—But Alvarez comes.
The state requires thee, and Ruzalla yields.
Farewell.

Rod. Farewell, my love. Alvarez comes to give me

The monarch back; but thou shalt see me soon
The lover, not the king; and fear not thou
The lover faithless, or the king unjust.
[*Exit* RUZALLA.

ALVAREZ *enters at the opposite side of the Stage.*

Alv. Forgive me, sir; perhaps I come intrusive
Upon your privacy.

Rod. It matters not;
I have an office for thee. Thou rememb'rest
The business that we talked of yesterday.

Alv. Touching your purposed marriage with the Lombard,
Astolpho's daughter, beauteous Elazuna?

Rod. Aye; but that marriage must not be, Alvarez.

Alv. How! must not be, sir?

Rod. No; and thou shalt stop
This yet unfinished treaty, on what terms
Thy best invention may give colour to.

Alv. I would do much to serve the king I love,
But never was his service so ungrateful;
He bids me taint his honour and my own.

Rod. There is an honour dearer to thy master,
Whose dictates he obeys; let thine be silent,

And question it no farther.

Alv. 'Tis enough.
Thy will precludes a subject's argument.
But may I dare to wonder why it is so?

Rod. Thy counsel only, not affection, prompted
My choice of Elazuna; now my heart
Has made its own election of another.

Alv. Then may I hope that other as deserving
A monarch's love.

Rod. That other is Ruzalla.
Alvarez, there is something more than woman
About Ruzalla. Of Ruzalla's beauty
Possession cloys not: from Ruzalla's mind
Beams forth a gentle charm, that makes desire
Almost a virtue.

Alv. There's an angel form,
That women easily contrive to wear
When they would gain or keep us; trust me, sir,
Beyond that purpose, they are women still,
Froward, and vain, and weak; Alvarez knows them.

Rod. And is Ruzalla thus?

Alv. I know not that;
Nor do I know what privilege she has
Beyond her sex's charter. Thou hast found her
A very woman.

Rod. Talk no more of that;
It grates my conscience.
Alv. Make it not a crime,
That thou wert lucky; at that yielding hour
Another might have triumphed.
Rod. Think'st thou that?
Alv. I think she was not difficult to win.
I have known beauties stand a siege for months,
Whom now your very pages, as they pass,
Make wanton comments on. Yet they had tears,
And gentleness, and virtue, for the fools,
Whom conscience made their husbands.—
Start not, sir;
Perhaps it is not fair to judge Ruzalla
By other women; yet the solitude
In which her father left her, that seclusion
From the world's converse, is the veriest tempter
A woman's mind can meet with; there's a looseness
In her own fancy, that seduces more
Than could the devil; and the first man she sees,
If he but talk of love, is sure to conquer.
Rod. By heaven, it may be so, though I've beheld her
With eyes of dotage. Yet, my promise given,
I am entangled there.—But now she left me,

Assured I should be hers.

Alv. That promise, sir,
I must be bold to tell you, had been pledged
To me, on the behalf of Elazuna,
And was not yours to give.

Rod. 'Tis shrewdly fancied;
But still thou canst not quiet the remembrance
Of how much wrong I've done her.

Alv. Let her wrongs
Have reparation any way but this,
That does your crown, your fame, your people, wrong.

Rod. Her father's service too!

Alv. I grant his service,
And it has been requited, though indeed
He holds it past requital. But to him
The story of his daughter is unknown,
And should continue so; else he might stir,
In the weak minds of the misjudging many,
Somewhat of danger. Yet, though he is valiant,
Methinks a power, like thine, should hardly fear him.

Rod. Ha! fear him!

Alv. Yes; I would not have it said,
The king of Spain was *frightened* from his purpose,
To wed the daughter of the Lord Alphonzo.

Rod. Damnation! frightened!

Alv. Pardon the expression;
And yet this same Alphonzo talked to-day,
As if his master *durst* not disoblige him.
Rod. How! durst not, sayst thou?
Alv. Thou didst mark his carriage
At your first interview.
Rod. I marked it not.
Alv. Some loyal souls there were, that did observe it,
And warmly too. He threw a look around him,
As if his presence did his sovereign honour;
And when he mentioned certain Moorish prisoners,
Whom this last battle gained us, with the accent
Of stern reproof he touched on the disposal
Of some he took before, though it was done
By order from thyself.
Rod. Why, yes; methinks
I do remember that; but 'twas not much.
Alv. He did indeed restrain his swelling spirit,
Though with a haughty saving of what else
Another time he might say. Some time since,
I met him in the palace: those apartments,
Your favour there assigned him, he has filled
With the same moody spirits, that surround
His table at Montverdo. I observed him

Amidst their listening circle, and endeavoured
To shun the meeting; but he crossed my way
With a fierce air of menace. He had heard,
I know not how, your purpose of alliance.
Of this he talked at first; called it a traffic,
An ignominious traffic of your hand
To serve some end of mine. When on this theme
His passion once had roused itself, he used
Such terms of outrage 'gainst your government,
As it might seem in me, who long have borne
A prince's name, invidious to repeat.
But, in conclusion, stifling up his anger
To proud contempt, he said, you should be taught;
Himself would teach you what you owed your people.

Ros. Insolent slave! And did he dare to say this?

Mor. This, and much more; it is a thing of custom
For him, and his associates, to declaim on.
If mere usual pass unquestioned, royalty
Will grow mere derision, and the name
Of monarch be a jest. Forgive me, sir,
If my zeal warms it plainly—now, when this man
Shall see there rest his daughter—

Ros. Talk no more on't;
I give my idle passion to the winds.
I am a king again.

Alv. Act as becomes
That sacred title, and this haughty lord
Shall bend before thee. It were well, perhaps,
If this day's council should be held without him.

Rod. It shall, by heaven!

Alv. 'Twill put him to the trial.
And yet it were not politic to seem
Neglectful of his service; let him have
That cool indifferent notice, which his pride
Will feel beyond neglect; then, if it bear him
The length I mean it should, the general censure
Will fasten upon him.

Rod. I see thy purpose,
And, though I am not made for artifice,
Yet thus far thou shalt guide me.
Let it but come to fair and open contest,
And then Rodriguez needs not an instructor.

[*Exit* RODRIGUEZ.

ALVAREZ *alone.*

So, I have touched him in the very part
That pride and passion wince in; but Alphonzo,
Whose temper suits my scheme, will gall him there,
Even into madness: as for this Ruzalla,
His general estimation of the sex

Will I so aid, by colouring to my purpose
Her weakness to himself, that he shall hold
Her beauty at a rate of easy purchase.
Her haughty sire, like some malignant power,
Has checked my growing fate, and kept it down;
But here, I trust, he falls. Alvarez then
Shall stand secure, and Spain confess her lord.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE—*A Hall in the Palace.*

ALPHONZO *alone.*

'Tis as the wise have said,—Man's promised bliss
Eludes his grasp; vainly we trust to-morrow,
For hours of happiness withheld to-day:
To-morrow comes, a very bankrupt too,
And leaves us still unpaid! I had set down
My little portion of remaining life,
For the mild comforts of a daughter's love,
To smooth the path, that leads me to the grave.
But now, when I have reached my native land,
And met my child, a sullen influence seems
To hover round us. On Ruzalla's brow
I mark a settled sorrow, though at times
Dimly she strives to smile, and gives the gloom
A sickly face of gladness.—
Elvira here! she may be useful now.

Enter ELVIRA.

Come hither, child: I think thou lovest thy mistress,
And hast some cause; thou art not much a servant,
But rather bear'st the office of a friend.
Hast thou observed Ruzalla, in my absence,
As well as thou could'st wish her?

Elv. Well! my lord?

Alph. Why, yes; methinks her look is altered much;
Her cheek has lost the smile it used to meet
A father's eye with; where its dimples played,
Sits pale unjoyous thought.

Elv. Of late, my lord,
Somewhat of this I marked, and once or twice
I wished to ask the cause; but fear withheld me.

Alph. Say'st thou?—

Elv. Her wonted cheerfulness is gone:
Pensive she sits the live-long day, nor marks
The circling hours, that wont to portion out
The uses of her time. The little arts,
That once she fondly practised, please no more.
Neglected lies the half-embroidered scarf,
And the dim landscape, which her pencil traced,
Stands colourless beside her. Even the flowers,

She loved so much to rear, she now beholds,
Regardless of their beauty; save alone
One favourite lily, which she visits oft,
As if it were companion of her sadness.—
" And thou shalt die," I heard her say, " and shed
Thy beauteous leaves; unspotted thou shalt shed
them:
When shall I fall like thee!" and then she raised
Its bending head, and looked so very piteous,—
Though it was but a flower, in sooth, I wept.

Alph. So much in love with grief!

Elv. 'Twas even thus.
And sometimes will she bid me fetch my lute:
But if I try to win her from her sorrow
With mirthful sounds, she chides me for my playing;
Then will she take the lute, and touch an air
Solemn and sad, while ever and anon
She pauses o'er some melancholy sound,
And casts upon the strings a wistful look,
As if they spoke a language that she loved.

Alph. Indeed! And has she long been thus, Elvira?

Elv. I did observe it first about the time
Your last dispatches, which Ramirez brought,
Arrived from Afric; 'twas about the time

The king was at Montverdo.

Alph. Ha! the king!

Said'st thou the king?—The king was at Montverdo!

Elv. I thought my lady had already told you.

Alph. By heaven, she did not!—How!—Montverdo!—Came he

In private thither?—Staid he long, Elvira?—

My daughter was alone!—Tell me, I charge thee.

Elv. By chance, my lord, he came; warm in the chace,

He left his train behind, and lost his way

Amidst the winding paths, that cross the wood;

'Twas there my lady met him.

Alph. Was it but this? No more?

And ever since thou hast observed her droop,

And cherish sadness?

Elv. But I ne'er suspected

This visit as the cause.

Alph. I would not have thee.

I left Ruzalla guardian of herself.—

If thou hast seen a father's weakness in me,

(I think thou hast not much,) imagine not

I would employ thee, as a spy, to feed

My unadvised suspicion. Breathe not a sound

To touch my family's honour.

Elv. If my words
Unwittingly offended, good my lord,
I pray you pardon me. I have a heart,
If it could speak—Heaven knows the love I bear
To thee, and to my lady.

Alph. I believe thee.
Prithee forget it. I am tender there,
Perhaps too much.—No matter, think not on't.
Trust me, I did not mean to doubt thy faith.
This way my daughter comes.—No more, but leave us. [*Exit* ELVIRA.

ALPHONZO *walks a few moments in seeming disorder.* RUZALLA *enters.*

Alph. Thou comest upon my wish; when there's a thought
Within this bosom to accuse my child,
I would not linger long beneath its pressure.
Methinks, I've used a parent's privilege,
Not to command, but love; and joined the name
Of friend to that of father:—have I not?

Ruz. Thou hast been ever gracious—wherefore, wherefore,
That look of sternness now?

Alph. It speaks my heart;

An honest heart, that hates the thought of falsehood.

Ruz. Of falsehood!

Alph. Yes; a falsehood of the mind,
To hide some blushing purpose from the light.
The king! Rodriguez!—does the name alarm thee?
Why was his visit to Montverdo hid,
As if it carried guilt?—Ha! dost thou tremble?
By Heaven! thou draw'st such pictures to my fear—
Give me to know it all.

Ruz. I will;—but pity me,—
Look not so angrily. I cannot speak—
My father!—

Alph. Weep not, I will hear thee calmly.

Ruz. When thou wert absent, I confess, the king
Was at Montverdo; this I should have told,
But that my fears—

Alph. Thy fears! Why should'st thou fear?
What brought him hither?

Ruz. First by chance he came,
Bewildered in the chace.

Alph. Ha! say'st thou, *first?*
It seems he came *again*, then?

Ruz. Yes.

Alph. And saw thee!
Was it not so? alone?
Ruz. He did.
Alph. And told
Thy beauty, and his love?
Ruz. He talked of love;
But in such terms of honour and respect,
As might not wrong the daughter of Alphonzo
To listen, while he spoke.
Alph. And thou didst hear him?
Ruz. Would that I had not! But forgive my weakness.
Canst thou forgive me? Oh!—
Alph. Thou seest me patient.
Go on.
Ruz. 'Tis but a little hour ago,
Within these walls again he vowed his passion;
Told me with what regret he bore the forms
Of state and royalty, that now withheld him
From giving, where his heart was fixed, the hand
That should attend it; that a little time
Should make him mine for ever.
Alph. Said he this?
Ruz. This, with the fervent language of sincerity,
To-day he told me.

Alph. Mark thy father, then.—
I charge thee, as thou lovest thy peace of mind;
As honour, or as life is dear to thee,
To banish him for ever from thy thoughts:
His promises are false, his love perdition.
Ruz. Is it indeed so fatal? then—
Alph. I know it;
Delighted thou hast heard him, and drunk in
The poison of his flattery: but know,
Unthinking girl, the treacherous king betrays thee.
That hand, he would have offered, his base minion,
The cursed Alvarez, has made traffic of.
He means to wed another.
Ruz. Ha! another!
Support me—Wed another!
[*Leaning faint on her Father's Arm.*
Alph. My child!—Ruzalla!—Recollect thyself.—
Strikes it so deep? [*She begins to recover.*
How is it with thee now?
Ruz. I am myself again. I will forget him.
'Tis fit I should. Pardon these woman's tears.
Alph. Perdition seize him!—but I will be calm.—
Once more, I charge thee, tear him from thy heart.
Thou know'st,—I think thou dost,—thy father's kind-
ness;

But thou rememberest, too, that sacred honour,
Which he has ever valued more than life;
Which he must value even beyond his love
To thee,—to thee, the last remaining child,
That heaven has left his age!—
Go, wipe away thy tears, and think of those,
That fret his wrinkled cheeks. [*Exit* RUZALLA.

ALPHONZO *alone.*

This false ungrateful king!—even at the time
When his own battles rested on my sword!—
I know him passion's slave, and yet, by Heaven,
I scarce can think him base enough to mean
This outrage on her honour!—but he comes,
And I shall ease my swelling heart, to tell him
The wrongs that he has done me.

Enter RODRIGUEZ *and Attendants.*

Rod. [*To an Officer of his Train.*] Tell thou the Moor, that we accept his terms:
But for our prisoners, they must bear their chains
Till these conditions, which the peace requires
Their master to perform, shall be fulfilled.
[*Exit Officer.*
My Lord Alphonzo, we had asked your presence

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
Alph. [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
Rod. We [illegible];
[illegible]
Alph. But its nature
Requires your private ear.
Rod. [*To his Attendants.*] Withdraw, and leave us.—
Now, we're alone.
Alph. Even in the general cause,
A citizen of Spain, whose rank hath placed him
Near to thy throne, my duty bids me speak,
If e'er thy actions break the sacred bond
That links thee to thy people;—but at present,
I have a nearer right, a private title
To tell my sovereign, (not forgetting what
I owe him as my sovereign,) he has wronged me.
Rod. Your speech, Alphonzo, oft assumes a tone,

That scarce becomes a subject; but your life
May plead some privilege. Speak.
Alph. Becomes a subject!
My speech becomes a freeman.—Thou hast wronged me,
Even in the tenderest part, my family's honour;
And 'twere to be unworthy of their blood,
Did I not guard it, though against a king.
Rod. Bend not that eye of pride upon thy sovereign,
Presumptuous lord! He has an honour too,
The sacred honour of the Spanish throne,
And will maintain it.
Alph. Did I hear aright?—
Presumptuous!—Yes, I know thou art my sovereign.
Presumptuous!—For that honour of thy throne
This arm has often fought, this bosom bled.
Presumptuous!—But no matter.—Did it suit
The honour of the monarch, or the man,
To steal in secret on my guardless house,
And practise on the weakness of my child?
Rod. How! practise!
Alph. Yes, to seize the yielding hour
Of solitude, in absence of her father.

I think thou couldst not mean,—I trust thou couldst not,—
Nor do I hold her virtue to be won
Even by a monarch's siege; but to seduce
The soft affections of her artless soul,
To sport unfeeling with her peace of mind,
These are ungracious arts.

Rod. Urge me no further,
Else——

Alph. Dost thou threaten me?—Urge thee no further!
Must I then stoop, and bear indignity?
By Heaven, I will not so betray the rights
Of freedom, or of manhood! Thou shalt hear me.

Rod. Shalt hear thee? Dost thou know me? On thy life—
But I forgive thee for Ruzalla's sake.
I found her—much less haughty than her sire.

Alph. Found her!—less haughty—found her!—
Speak it again, that I may tell thee, king!—
Thou darest not—

Rod. Darest not, traitor!—Hear it all then,
And let that honour thou presumest to lift
In proud defiance 'gainst thy sovereign, know
Rodriguez for its lord.—Montverdo's groves

Witnessed the joys thy beauteous daughter gave me.

Alph. Tyrant, 'tis false.

Rod. How! villain! [*Strikes* ALPHONZO.

Alph. It is well.

I thank thee thus.

[*Drawing his Sword;* ALVAREZ *and Guards rush in, and throw themselves betwixt the King and* ALPHONZO.

Alv. Forbear, my royal master,

And let our faithful swords—

Rod. I charge you, hold!

Secure the slave unhurt.

Alph. I am your prisoner;

But first—

[*Offers to stab himself; they disarm him.*

Rod. I thank your zeal; [*To the Guards.*] bear that old traitor hence;

Chained in a dungeon, let him wait the doom

His crime deserves.—This way with me, Alvarez;

Spain shall be taught to reverence her king,

Clothed in the terrors, that command obedience.

[*Exeunt the King, and* ALVAREZ.

Alph. [*After a pause, to one of the Guards.*] I prithee, tell me—thou hast been a soldier—

Are these things so?—I think, I am not mad,
Though I am old and weak.
Guard. It grieves me much
To see thee thus. My duty to my king
Makes me a foe to treason, else a soldier
Should be Alphonzo's friend.
Alph. I am Alphonzo.
Where is my daughter?
Guard. I will send to tell her,
How it has fared with thee. Her intercession
May win the king to mercy.
Alph. Intercession!—
Ruzalla's intercession!—Soft, a moment—
Let me remember—
Dishonoured!—Stained!—Damnation!—
Guard. Good, my lord,
Suit your best courage to the present hardship,
And bear it like a man.
Alph. Say'st thou, a man?—
Let me look on thee. I have seen thee fight;
Thou know'st me too—bear it!—Art thou a father?—
Oh!—
Guard. I can but pity thee.—But see Alvarez;
The king, I hope, relents.

Enter ALVAREZ.

Alv. Bear off your prisoner to the Western Tower.—
My lord, although I know you love me not,
This order hurts me. But let me advise you,
Abate the pride, that suits not your condition.
The king is generous, and your former service
May plead for pardon; but it must be sued for.

[*Exit* ALVAREZ.

Alph. Away, thou parasite of power! my soul
Disdains to waste a thought upon thy meanness.
Oh! oh! Ruzalla!—bear me to my prison.—
Age, infamy, and bonds!—shew me the dungeon
That's dark enough to shut dishonour out,
And close the eye of scorn upon Alphonzo.

[*Exeunt.*

Ped. Oh! my master.

Alph. Ha! that voice,
Methinks, should be remembered—Pedro?

Ped. Yes,
Thine ever faithful Pedro.

Alph. Hast thou found me,
Even now, when common friendships stand aloof?
But get thee hence, my fortune is contagious;
It may be fatal to have served a traitor.

Ped. Far be that thought from me! I'll follow thee
Even in the face of ruin. Blessed be the chance,
That placed me here; for, in his hour of need,
I still may serve Alphonzo.

Alph. I remember
Thy faith and honesty. Did I not send thee
To my late noble friend the Lord Garanza?
He did provide for thee.

Ped. My honoured lord,
Thy name procured me friends, and—may I boast—
My service did their favour no disgrace.
At length, unfit for a more active office,
'Tis now my trust to guard the gloomy strength
Of these detested walls. Merciful Heaven!
And do I see thee here?—imprisoned! chained!

Alon. [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] me.—
[illegible]—Oh. [illegible]
[illegible] Oh!—

Pal. Why, my good lord,
[illegible], and wherefore dost thou bend
Thine eyes so [illegible] on yon horrid cells?
[illegible] my master's age
Should find no better dwelling! But I hope
All will be well again.

Alph. Thou dost remember her, I know thou dost;
I've seen her sit upon thy knee, and smile
At thy [illegible] song; and then thou feignedst to weep,
Then she wept too, and asked thee what thou ail'dst.—
Was it not so?

Pal. Means my good lord his daughter,
The fair Ruzalla?

Alph. Daughter!—who—what daughter?—
Ruzalla!—Who was't spoke of her?—Ruzalla!—
Stained by the tyrant—Curses on thy tongue!

Thou liest.—Alphonzo's daughter!—Oh! my brain!
Gape, gape, and hide the blushes of Alphonzo!
[*Throwing himself on the Ground.*

Ped. Be comforted, my lord; I pray you rise,
And let the service of a faithful heart,
Poor as it is, be something to its master.

Alph. No; I will grovel here, it suits my state,
An abject, vile, dishonoured, coward wretch,
Crawling in chains, that meanly bears to live
A thing for scorn to point at.—All the plagues
Of Heaven's hot wrath o'ertake her!

Ped. I have carried her
Oft in these arms, and heard her lisp her words
With such a voice of music! Oh! my lord,
You then have blessed her after. Have I lived
To hear thee pray for curses on Ruzalla?—
I could remind thee of such scenes—

Alph. Sayest thou?—I will be calm.—Speak, my good Pedro;
I think thou lovest me—Speak.

Ped. When my good lady,
Her mother, died, they took the child away,
That her resembling features might not wound
Thy suffering soul afresh; nor brought her back

Till time had soothed thy sorrows. 'Twas on the eve
Of that fierce battle, where your valiant sons,
Alas! too early, fell. The trumpet's sound
Had called you forth, and round the castle's gate
Your faithful vassals ranged their moony files.
Forth in my arms I brought the lovely babe,
Who, when she saw thee clad in jointed mail,
Shrunk back, and nestled fearful in my bosom,
Till by caresses, and the soothing words,
That children know, I won her from her fears;
And, after stealing oft a doubtful look,
She smiled in dimply innocence again,
And stretched her little hands, and stroked thy beard.

Alph. Oh!

Ped. Around her, as it chanced, her nurse had wrapped
A silken scarf, in which her mother's hand
Erewhile a golden ornament had wrought,
The blazon of your house: this, as you clasped
Your daughter to your bosom, caught your eye;
Sudden you started back, and gave her to me,
As if the sight had stung you; then, once more,
To your big heaving bosom pressed the child,

And wept and gazed, and gazed and wept again.
At length, with half-averted look, you waved
Your hand, in signal for the martial sound,
That bids the soldiers march. The trumpet's clang
Around us echoed; and, with eager strides,
The front you gained, and hurried from the walls.

Alph. Prithee, no more. Have I not cause to curse?

Had she died then, I were indeed the last
Poor withering branch of a once honoured race;
But infamy had never cankered it,
Nor marked it for the scorn of after times.
But 'tis no matter; I shall soon forget it.
The tyrant's wrath will free me from these pangs,
And give me death.

Ped. Death! sayest thou? Oh, my master!

Alph. Except revenge, death is my dearest wish.

Ped. Thou shalt not die. My fate has placed me here

The keeper of thy prison. I will free thee
This very night.

Alph. I thank thee; but my life
Shall not be purchased at the price of thine.

Ped. Think not of mine. But we may 'scape together.

A little westward lies the forest's verge;
I know each secret path, and will conduct thee
Safe from the keenest foe. Grant me but this—
Alph. No; thou art here in trust, and I thy prisoner;
Thy faith the tyrant's outrage hath not cancelled;
Nor would I have a thing, that e'er was mine,
Touched with dishonour.—Ha! that stings, that stings;—
My curses on her!
Ped. Yet let me intreat thee.—
But look, my lord, thy noble friend Savedra;
Tidings, I hope, of good.

Enter SAVEDRA.

Sav. My friend Alphonzo!
And is it here we meet?—Ungrateful Spain!—
Turn and behold Savedra.
Alph. Think no more
Of such a wretch; he would not be remembered.
If thou would'st speak me comfort, tell me when
Shall shame be lost in death?
Sav. Shame never touched
My friend revered;—thy chains disgrace thy king.
Alph. If it be so, why lingers then the doom
That gives us both relief?

Sav. The doom, thou meanest,
I trust shall never pass.—I tried to gain
Admittance to Rodriguez, but his guards
Withheld me from his presence. Young and fiery,
His passions break out wild, and scorn restraint;
But reason will resume her power again,
And tell him what he owes thee.

Alph. Think not that;
For baseness will not bear to be obliged.
Those debts are cancelled here,—these are the wreaths [*Pointing to his Chains.*
My services have gained me.

Sav. But Ruzalla,
Who now is with him, shall not plead in vain
To save a father.

Alph. With him, sayest thou? with him!
Ruzalla with him!—Oh, I shall run mad!

Sav. Be patient.

Alph. Patient!—yes, I will be patient.

Sav. Thy wrongs are felt, thy wrongs shall be redressed.
There's not a heart that's worthy of thy friendship,
But is thy friend, and justice shall be done thee.

Alph. It *shall* be done me. Thou hast roused again
Alphonzo's better self.—It shall be done me!—

Is vengeance in our view?

Sec. A chosen party,
Who long with indignation have beheld
Rodriguez governed by a haughty minion,
Turning at will the tide of royal favour,
Thy injuries have roused; even now they meet,
And wait for me to join them. To the soldiers,
Whose van already has approached Toledo,
Perez has carried tidings of their leader.—
But, soft—Alvarez here! I'd not be seen;
Farewell! [*Exit with* PEDRO.

Alph. By heavens, 'tis great!—Farewell, my gallant friends,
My fellow-soldiers!—Tyrant, thou shalt tremble.

Enter ALVAREZ.

Alv. I come, Alphonzo, to pronounce thy doom,
Thy mitigated doom; thy beauteous daughter
Has pleaded for thy life, and has obtained it.

Alph. Then let me die; 'tis infamy to take
What she can plead for.

Alv. I obey my king,
When I declare his will; with thee it suits not
His minister to argue.—Thou shalt live,
But upon special terms;—exile from Spain,

With such allowance as thy sovereign's grace
From thy demesnes may grant. Farther, he wills thee
Instant to quit Toledo; in an hour,
If thou art found within these walls, thou diest.

Alph. 'Tis well; I take the gift thy master sends:
But mark me, sir, it is not on the terms
Of obligation. Tell him, I accept it
But for the sake of vengeance; here, in thy presence,
Allegiance I forswear, and vow to hold
Eternal enmity and deadly hate
With him, thy tyrant master!—If I am free,
Then let him fear me.

Alv. These are words of phrensy.
I will not be unjust even to a foe;
Thy answer shall not reach him.—Fare thee well.

[*Exit* ALVAREZ.

Alph. And dost thou brave me? Let security,
The dream of fools, be with thee; sport and flutter,
On gaudy wing, amidst the buzzing tribe
Of insect courtiers. My revenge shall come,
Like a fierce whirlwind urged by angry heaven,
And sweep thee, shallow minion! from the earth.—

Enter PEDRO.

My Pedro!

Ped. Let me free thee from these chains.—
[*Taking off his Fetters.*
But look, my lord, where a poor suppliant comes.
[*Pointing to the Door.*

Alph. Ha! save me, hide me from that sight of shame!

Enter RUZALLA, *attended by* ELVIRA. *Her Father stands with his face averted;* PEDRO *at his side, holding his arm, and looking piteously at* RUZALLA.

Ruz. I know how base and hateful I am grown,
But think not that I come to ask forgiveness;
Thou can'st not grant it to offence like mine.
Give, give me misery! upbraid me, hate me!
Let me attend thee as the meanest slave,
My food the coarsest bread, my bed a dungeon;
But let it be with thee, with thee, my father!—
Thou hear'st me not.

Alph. I cannot speak, thou vile one!—
Look on these chains!—I cannot, even to curse thee!—
Off, let me pass, [*To* PEDRO.] it taints me to be near her!

Ruz. Thus let me fall before thee; prostrate thus,

Crawl to thy knees, and tell thee I'm thy child.
Oh! if my tears would let me, I could wake
Such soft remembrances of kindness past!—
My father!—

Alph. Here, here, in the eye of heaven,
I cast thee from me; and that bond of nature
Abjure for ever!

Ped. Let thy Pedro dare
To plead for mercy.

Alph. Mercy!—Pluck this eye out,
And bid me bear't, I will.—Forgive her!—
[*Pausing, and looking fiercely on her.*
No,
I will not stab thee!—Live to feel the pangs
Of infamy and guilt! The ceaseless gnaw
Of keen remorse be on thee, and despair
Cling to thy soul, as shame and woe to mine!
[*Exit* ALPHONSO.

Ruz. [*After looking for some time wildly after her Father.*] Amen, amen! Despair shall aid Ruzalla.—Hast thou no dagger for me?—Hear me, hear me!—Gone, gone for ever!

Ped. Take comfort, dearest lady.

Elv. Arise, my much-loved mistress!

Ruz. Hence, and leave me!

Here will I sit; here, on the pitying earth!

Ped. Do not despair thus; let me lead thee hence.

Ruz. And whither would'st thou lead me?—Is't not Pedro?

Ped. Thy well-known Pedro; still thy faithful servant.

Ruz. Elvira!

Elv. Here; what would my honoured lady?

Ruz. I think thou heard'st him curse me; didst thou not?

Elv. Alas, he spoke in bitterness of anguish,
And knew not what he said.

Ruz. I think he did not.
He was not wont to curse me.—Thou hast known us
In other days, good Pedro!—Give me thy hand;—
Did I say aught to offend thee?—I am better,
And can weep now.—Yet wherefore did he curse me?

Ped. Think not so deeply on't; heaven bless you both!

Ruz. I dare not ask it's blessing. But, for my father,
Hear me, ye powers of mercy! Visit not
His daughter's guilt on him; support his age;
Let not affliction bend him to the earth

Before his time; but when the hour arrives,
Marked for his last of life, then blunt the pang
That gives him rest, and let his closing eye
Look up in peace, and claim the joys of heaven!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE—*The Palace.*

RUZALLA *and* ALMEYDA.

Ruz. Yes, my Almeyda, I am calmer now;
The pangs of misery will blunt at last
Its sense to feel them.—I can hear thee tell me
Of hope, of comfort; but it will not be.
There is a prophet in Ruzalla's breast,
That tells her, she must look for comfort now
Only in death; for quiet, in the grave.

Alm. Yield not to these impressions of thy fear.
Call up the native vigour of thy soul,
And let it speak for thee, that still thou bear'st
A mind above the meanness of the guilty.
Give not the cruel king this triumph o'er thee;
Amidst thy father's hard unpitying honour,
And his injustice, vindicate the woman,
Whom both have wronged.

Ruz. Such is the voice of reason and Almeyda;
But my poor drooping heart, sick of its griefs,
Cannot be roused to hear it. I look round
On all the tangled paths my fate hath left me,
And see them leading only to despair!—

Alm. But see Elvira.

Enter ELVIRA.

Ruz. Elvira, tell me, tell me, hast thou seen him?

Elv. I searched in vain, though some uncertain rumours
Pronounce him still within Toledo's walls.
Near to the tower he left, a buzzing crowd
Darken the streets, and talk of good Alphonzo.
And while some better voice recites his wrongs,
The dullest of the audience stands on tiptoe,
Draws his breath short, and mutters indignation.

Ruz. And am I then become a public theme,
For common tongues to descant on? Distraction!—
Go, my Almeyda, go; friendship for me
Taints the fair form of virtue: Go, and leave me.

Alm. Thou knowest I will not leave thee; ne'er can virtue
Look fairer to the heavens, than thus employed
In friendship to thy sorrows.—Would that Elvira

Had found thy father!

Elv. As I entered here,
Close by the wall that flanks the palace-gate,
I marked a slave belonging to Savedra;
But when I questioned him about my lord,
Some of the royal train appeared in view,
When suddenly he slunk away, and left me
Without a perfect answer.

Alm. At Savedra's
Myself will try to find him: He will hear
Almeyda plead; he cannot hear in vain
The voice of friendship plead the cause of nature.

Ruz. Wilt thou indeed?—Yet, ah! that hope is vain;
The sacrifice to honour must be made.
But there's a friendly weakness at my heart,
That will not long endure this war of fate.—
Would I were quiet, and my name forgotten!

Alm. Do not despair thus.

Ruz. Thus I wish to think.—
When I am gone, Almeyda, and the storm
My cruel guilt hath raised is heard no more,
Be thou the daughter of my father's age,
And let him bless Rozalia in her friend.
Perhaps, when the dark grave has covered me,

And every tongue is silent of my shame,
He then may hear thee tell him of his child,
Recal the memory of our better days,
When she was innocent, and he was happy;
Then if a soft forgiving tear he sheds,
Tell him I hoped for that, and died contented.

Alm. Talk not of dying; thou shalt live to bless him.
Farewell. [*Exit* ALMEYDA.

Ruz. Elvira, I have wearied thee to-day,
But yet I cannot spare thee to thy rest.
In these dread hours of silence, and of night,
And my own busy fears, I'd have thee near me.
Not long, perhaps, not long, my faithful girl,
Shall I require thy service!—Get thy beads,
And wait me in my chamber; I'll but pass
Some moments here in thought, and follow thee.—
[*Exit* ELVIRA.
In thought! and what should be Ruzalla's thoughts?—
When shall this conflict of the soul be past,
To save the pain of thinking!—Ha, the king!
[*Going.*

Enter RODRIGUEZ.

Rod. Stay, my Ruzalla, hear me!

Raz. Dost thou come
To triumph o'er me? Sure thou can'st not make me
More wretched now.

Rod. I come to give thee comfort.—
Forget thy father's outrage, injured fair one,
And claim protection here.

Raz. And dost thou talk
Of injuries, inhuman as thou art?—
My father, said'st thou?—Oh, I have no father!

Rod. Think not of him, but let my love supply
A parent's place.

Raz. Give, give me back my father!—

[*Wildly.*

Alone, amidst the horrors of the night,
Where does he wander?—Hark! the wind is up,
And how's along the heath!—Must he lay down
Upon the cold damp earth these hoary locks?—
See how he casts his glaring eyes to heaven,
And calls for curses on me!—
I will endure't no longer. [*Offering to rush out.*

Rod. Stay, Razalla;
Where would thy frenzy lead?

Raz. I know not where.—
Say'st thou I'm mad?—I think I'm near to madness:—

'Tis thou hast brought me to't!—

[*Looking on him with a fixed wildness.*

Thou art Rodriguez;
Thou hast undone me!

Rod. Calm thy troubled soul,
And know me better. Fear not for thy father;
O'ershadowed by thy beauty, even rebellion
Shall find a sanctuary. Then brood no more
On evils past, but let us think of love
And joy to come.

Ruz. But joy shall never come;
Not to Ruzalla! All her future days
Are marked for misery!—I am calm again,
And know how wretched, how forlorn I am.
Alas, my Lord! though I may feel myself
Unworthy of your love, my sufferings claim
At least your pity!—I would ask,—I know not,—
Some lingering days of dark oblivious sorrow,
Till I could look with hope to heaven, then close
My eyes in peace!

Rod. Away! thou shalt not think
So poorly of thyself. Has nature formed thee
So exquisitely fair, to shut thy charms,
Like age and ugliness, in cloistered solitude?
It must not, shall not be!—They shall beam forth,

The envy of a gazing world around thee.
Spain shall behold thee rule her subject monarch,
And bend before thy beauties; circling years
Shall crown thy wishes with fresh opening pleasures,
And never-ending love.

Ruz. My Lord, my Lord,
Guilty and wretched as I know myself,
I am not quite so abject. I have lost
The pride of honour, not the sense of virtue;
The life thy words would point at I disdain.—
Leave me to suffer, but insult not thus
The misery thou hast caused.

Ruz. Unkindly said!—
Insult thee! Thou hast little known, Ruzalla,
The power thou bear'st within this throbbing bosom.
Look on me still with that transporting tenderness,
As once within Montverdo's peaceful groves,——

An Officer enters hastily.

[illegible] this incursion, slave!

Ofi. My royal Lord,
Forgive my rudeness from the cause that prompts it.
[illegible] sent me on the spur of haste,
To give you this, [*Delivering a Paper,*] now, from a
hand unknown.

Delivered to thy servant.

Rod. [*Looking on the Paper.*] How!—"Conspiracy!—

"To vindicate their rights—Alphonzo's injuries—

"Ready to burst."—Away, and bid Alvarez

Attend our pleasure; he's unfit to reign

Whom fear enslaves.—A nameless scrawl,—delivered,

Say'st thou, by one unknown?—A tale like this

Should come on weightier terms to find belief.—

No matter; hence, we'll talk on't.— [*Exit Officer.*

My Ruzalla,

I go but to rebuke their groundless fears;

Think of my love, and learn to conquer thine.

[*Exit* RODRIGUEZ.

Ruz. [*Alone.*] I know not what to hope, or what to fear;

But, if the bodings of the heart be true,

I shall not long do either. A still voice,

Like that of fate, speaks its dread summons here.—

An Attendant enters.

Ha! what would'st thou?

Attend. Madam, a stranger, clad in mean attire,

Would speak with you in private.

Ruz. Let him enter.—
[illegible] with me. Am I not then forgotten?
[illegible] I were.

[illegible] *producing a Person muffled*
[illegible] *makes a sign to the Servant*
[illegible]
[illegible] would name thee; ye
[illegible]
Alph. [illegible]
[*Throwing off his Disguis*
Ruz. My father!
Alph. There was once
A time when I was proud to be thy father.
Fallen as thou art, I have not yet forgot thee,
But come, thus muffled in a mean disguise,
To shew thee what remains for one so lost
As is Ruzalla.
Ruz. Let me kneel before thee,
(Spurn me not now, but hear thy wretched daughter,
And tell thee all the miseries I endure.—
But yet I will not. Think not upon me;
My heart shall only pour a fervent prayer
For blessings on thee! but no sigh shall 'scape it
For thy unkindness;—I deserve it all.—

And yet I tremble when I see thee bend
That eye of horror on me!—Oh, my father!
Alph. I did but look on her, who was the last
Of a long line of purity and honour;
On whom had heaven bestowed its dearest gifts
So richly, that it seemed to set her up
A pattern for admiring eyes to gaze on—
Who gave this shrine of beauty, fame, and virtue,
For guilt and loathsome infamy to dwell in.—
These are the stains thou bear'st;—and how to clear
them;— [*After a pause.*
Think'st thou of that?—There is yet one way left.
Ruz. I know it, 'tis to die.
Alph. Thou say'st aright;
For pity shrouds the errors of the dead,
And obloquy's envenomed arrows fall
Short of the grave.—Thou would'st not live dishonoured?
Ruz. I have been little used to think on death.
A parent's kindness made my days so happy,
That my fond heart forgot to meditate
On aught beyond them.
Alph. Pause a moment then;
Breathe out a prayer of penitence to heaven
To pardon thy offences,—for——

Ruz. Alas!
Why dost thou stop?—Oh, speak! for those pale lips,
Trembling in horrid silence, chill my blood
Beyond what utterance could!
Alph. Then—[*Pausing again.*]—I have passed
A father's sentence on thee.
Ruz. Oh!—to kill me!
Alph. To save thee from the infamy of living!—
Thou shalt not bear about a wretched being,
The mark of slander, and the jest of folly;
Nor be the tyrant's property, for hours
Of wanton dalliance!—Fogh! thou art not sunk
So very low, to wish for such a life!—
This dagger——
Ruz. Ha!
Alph. Nay, start not; 'tis to cancel
The foul disgraceful sum of all the past,
And shade the ruin of Alphonzo's house
With something noble yet.
Ruz. Alas! to me
Life has indeed no good thing left to hope for!
Sorrow and shame brood o'er the dreary prospect.—
Yet still the weakness of my sex betrays me;
The softness that undid me makes me fearful,

And, though I wish not life, I dread to die!—
Yet frown not on me, for I shall not live;
'Tis but a little while, and this poor heart
Shall beat itself to rest, and save my father
The murder of his child!—Thou may'st look down
On the cold earth that covers thy Ruzalla,
And bid her ashes rest, and be forgotten!

Alph. That voice has music still!—I see a cherub
That bends to hear it!—Tell me, dost remember
Thy mother?

Ruz. I have seen her in my dreams.

Alph. She died, ere thou could'st weep for losing her.
Methinks I see her now!—Her eye was dim;
For life was failing these: She grasped my hand,
And, pointing where thy infant innocence
Lapped thee in sleep beside her, gazed upon me,
And died without a groan!—I will not weep.—
Thou waked'st, and lisping out thy mother's name,
Which fond solicitude had formed thy lips to,
Smiled, as I pressed thee to my bursting heart,
And closed thy little eyes to sleep again.—
Oh! thou wert then the sweetest innocent,
Ere blessed a parent's arms! Thou hast been since
The only joy of his declining age!—

What thou art now thy father would forget,
But that unceasing memory's finger points
To where the honours of a spotless race
Lie fallen and withered!—Oh!

Ruz. Those tears are dreadful!—
Weep not, but stab me!

Alph. I had gathered in
All my full hopes, and joyed to doat upon them;
From the last battles of an honoured arm,
Returned to rest, to happiness, and thee;
To own myself a foolish fond old man,
And pillow these white locks upon thy bosom!—
This cuts the little thread of comfort left me,
And blasts my age before the fall of nature!—

Rod. [*Behind the Scenes.*] Put off dull business to a colder time;
I haste to joy, to love, and to Ruzalla.

Alph. Demons of hell! where am I?—What! a stale
And common thing!—Thus, tyrant, shalt thou find her!

[*Stabbing his Daughter, as* RODRIGUEZ *is entering.*

Ruz. [*Falling.*] Oh, thou hast cleft my heart!

Rod. Eternal powers!—

Haste, fly, my guards!—Alvarez!—Murderous villain!

Ruz. No power can save me.—I have breath enough
Yet left to ask, if now a father's honour
Can pardon——Oh! [*Dies.*

Rod. [*Drawing his Sword.*] Thus, traitor, thus Rodriguez speaks his sorrow.

Alph. Tyrant, I meet thee!— [*Draws.*
Powers of vengeance look
Upon these purple hands, and aid Alphonzo!—
[*They fight;* ALPHONSO *is wounded.*
Curse on my arm! 'tis withered by its age,
And sinks beneath my purpose!—
[*Fight again; and both are wounded.*
It is done!—
I fall revenged! [*Falling.*

Shouts are heard at a Distance. A Soldier enters.

Sold. Haste, haste, my Lord! for treason——
[*He stops on seeing the King, who is leaning faint upon his sword. Shouts are heard again.*

Alph. My friends are on the wing!—
But this prevents them—Oh, 'tis great, 'tis noble!—

[redacted]

FALSE SHAME,

OR

THE WHITE HYPOCRITE.

A COMEDY.

ALSE SHAME,

OR

E WHITE HYPOCRITE.

A COMEDY.

Comedy was unsuccessful in the representation; truth, it is not, I believe, well calculated for the It suffered, perhaps, a little by my absence from on, and the secresy which I thought it prudent to with regard to its author. Mr Harris shewed every ntion to it, and entertained the most sanguine assu- ce of its success; yet I have been told by some thea- cal people, that (owing probably to the state of Covent arden theatre at the time) it was ill cast, as the play- ouse phrase is, and the principal part (that of *Mount- fort)* very indifferently played. That character is of a kind difficult to play; depending on feelings some- times altogether suppressed, and often, when expressed in words, expressed in that short and stifled manner, which, in my idea, suited the situation and feelings of the speaker; its representation rather required aid from the performer, than lent it him in the performance.

The general idea of the piece, exhibiting a young man, of the most virtuous dispositions and amiable feelings, overpowered by a false shame, and led into conduct unworthy of him, certainly admitted of a dramatic representation, susceptible both of the lighter and more serious excellencies of comedy, and capable of a very useful moral effect; but it must be owned, that this idea is imperfectly brought out. I had once thoughts of re-modelling the piece, and of trying to place some of the characters in more theatrical situations; but I gave up the attempt, afraid of an alteration which might again expose me to a failure which I had once experienced. So I give the comedy here as it originally stood, flattering myself, from the opinion of some friends who have read it, that, in the reading, some of its merits will be better seen, and some of its defects less strongly felt, than they were in the representation.

PROLOGUE.

WHERE'ER the drama rose, to school the age,
Two rival sisters walked the comic stage;
Of different tempers, though their end the same,
To wield, in Virtue's cause, the scourge of shame;
To prune the shooting follies of the times,
And aid the law to punish lighter crimes.
But though of equal praise the family plan,
Like other sisters, they're not quite at one:
The elder, lively, laughing, frolic, gay;
The younger, somewhat serious, in her way.
The elder some accused as cross and rude,
The younger others called a solemn prude.
Here, on these boards,—at least the poets say't,
Who say strange things,—we've heard them in debate;
The elder had a bitter tongue of old,
And Sentiment herself can sometimes scold.
"You sister Grave-Airs!" said the laughing Muse,
"Who stalk with stately pace on high-heeled shoes,
Whose face demure was formed to whine and cry,
You give us precious stuff for comedy,

In fine long words your moral truths rehearse,
"And turn the Ten Commandments into verse."
Your *dramas* from France such sweet heroics teach,
Make tailors tragedise, and ploughmen preach
Your tags of tragedy, your ahs! and ohs!
Your fine-spun sentiments, and wire-drawn woes,
Shew us how comical it is—to weep!
And how diverting—to do what—to sleep!"
"'Tis thus," her sister Sentiment replies,
"Your ribald jokes affront the good and wise.
Your daubing brush, that pictures coarsely true,
May hold some glaring follies up to view;
My pencil draws from manners and the mind,
With nicer shades, and colours more refined;
Your satire's shafts may strike the vulgar breast,
Raise the loud laugh, and prompt the barren jest;
On finer souls my gentler arrows play,
And melt each folly and each vice away."
To-night our bard,—I praise his courage for't,—
To either sister tries to pay his court;
Some comic characters attempts to sketch,
Some deeper feelings humbly hopes to reach.
Your hearts, he knows, how quick soe'er to seize
True comic mirth, those serious feelings please;
The tear for worth, triumphant or oppressed,
Drops through the sunshine of the gayest breast;
And even your critics feel an honest pride
To pardon errors, if on Virtue's side.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

Sir Charles Dormer.
Mr Sedley.
Captain Wilkins.
Lord Lapwing.
Dr Mummy.
Tom, *a Servant of Sir Charles Dormer's.*
William, *a Servant of Mr Sedley's.*

Lady Dormer.
Miss Mountfort.
Miss Diana Danby.
Minikin, *Lady Dormer's Maid.*
Lucretia, *an Attendant of Miss Danby's.*

FALSE SHAME,

OR

THE WHITE HYPOCRITE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Library at Sir Charles Dormer's.*

Enter MINIKIN *and* TOM.

Tom. NAY, Mrs Minikin, I can't assist you indeed; how should I know how to put a lady's library in order?

Min. In disorder, you mean, Mr Thomas; people of genius, like my lady, are always found in confusion. Here—two large folios on this side of the chair;—put down these little fellows higgle-

dy piggledy on the other—so—spread those letters wider, on the right hand side of the table—this manuscript novel, by a lady, on the left; and for a mark in it, this sketch by a young painter, for a portrait of Lady Dormer in the character of Diana.

Tom. Pray, Mrs Minikin, is that a character your lady is perfect in?

Min. Why, Mr Thomas, that's none of my business. For my part, I have always found the best places with ladies that know the world. Your sober, hum-drum, matronly mistresses, give one a cast gown now and then, and reckon it a favour; but when there are little things to manage, and little things to conceal, little letters to deliver, little messages to carry, and little lies to invent, a waiting-maid must be stupid indeed, who does not make a good harvest on't.

Tom. And is yours a wheaten crop, that way, Mrs Minikin?

Min. Pretty well, if I had it all to myself; but there is an interloper in the business, Miss Diana Danby, my lady's sworn friend and confidante. I can only pick up some trifling business within

doors; Miss Diana is her secretary for foreign affairs.

Tom. Indeed! She that talks *sentiment,* as they call it, so bravely, and spoke t'other day, at dinner, of people's being in love with one anothers' *minds* forsooth, which she had some fine long name for.

Min. Oh yes; she has fine names for every thing. Her own name is a fine one, of her own making; —Diana Danby sounds much better than Dorothy Dobson.

Tom. Dobson! What, is she any relation of Ned Dobson's of Broadlands, in our parish?

Min. His daughter, who came to London in the waggon, to be put apprentice to a little mantua-maker in the borough. But now she is a poetess and sentimentalist, and has an elegant small house in Berner's-street, where my lady often goes—to visit her library.

Tom. In Berner's-street;—oho!—then I can tell you a secret;—my master sometimes visits her library too; he is fond of reading.

Min. Well, in these bad times, it is much if man and wife can agree in any thing.

Tom. But, if your lady agrees with Sir Charles, in liking Miss Danby's library, why should she trouble herself with any other? why pore over books, and peep through microscopes, with Mr Petal, Dr Mummy, and the rest? Even Lord Lapwing, with all his learning, and all his nobility, is hardly worth the trouble of so much study.

Min. Why, I don't know; my lady has a spirit about her that loves to lead every thing. Then she likes to be talked of, even by Mr Petal and Dr Mummy; and, last of all, (as the best reason generally comes last,) there is a pretty fellow, Tom, who is to be found among those monsters my lady's studies bring about her.

Tom. You mean Mr Sedley, that young relation of ours, who is lately come to town, from the university, for the first time since taking possession of his estate.

Min. Yes, I mean Mr Sedley; young, handsome, rich, is not he worth studying for?

Tom. Why, he is very well, to be sure; yet, in my mind, he wants something of the air of my master to make him a man for your lady's study.

Min. She has tried the air of your master so long, that a change of air may please her now, for variety's sake.

Tom. Yes, but he has a sort of awkward college stiffness about him, quite different from us of St James's. He talks so much of virtue.

Min. My lady will teach him to be a little—to talk a little less of virtue by and by.

Tom. But then he is the professed lover of your lady's young friend, Miss Mountfort. Her father, who died some time ago in India, was, it seems, Mr Sedley's most particular friend, and left him this daughter as a sort of legacy.

Min. But people don't always like such a legacy, especially when their friends, like Mountfort, have left nothing else to go along with it. Yet Sedley, I believe, thinks otherwise at present; he has not been a fortnight in town.—But, hush! here comes Miss Diana Danby; she has a much better notion of things. You must not be seen here.

[*Exit* TOM.

Enter Miss DANBY.

Miss Dan. Minikin, is the library as it ought to be? It is just on the hour of your lady's levee. Let me see—la! child, the books are so close, and

so smooth—fold down some of the leaves, thus—and thus.—Good gracious! what a blundering thing you are! Here you have laid down Hoyle in place of Sir Isaac Newton, and *Les Egaremens de Cœur* instead of the Treatise on Inflammables.

Enter Lord LAPWING.

Lord Lap. What! Miss Danby, lecturing on chemistry to Mrs Minikin? [*Exit* MINIKIN.

Miss Dan. No, my lord, chemistry is a science I don't in the smallest degree pretend to.

Lord Lap. 'Tis not, I assure you, a whit too deep for your sex, provided the master be a good one. I have a System of Attractions, which I could make any lady understand in a very short time.

Miss Dan. My lord, I have no doubt of your lordship's System of Attractions being understood by the ladies.

Lord Lap. Well said, Miss Danby, I protest very well said. I have always admired the justness of your conceptions, and the readiness of your elocution. But, seriously, I have taught many fair pupils much more intricate analogies than those of chemistry. Though indeed, now-a-days, most

of the young women are so giddy, and so forgetful, and the current of their pursuits runs so counter to the depths of science!—were it not for Lady Dormer and myself, the fashionable world would be almost unenlightened.

Miss Dan. But with two such constellations, my lord!

Lord Lap. Do they really call us so? I have been frequently told indeed, that something has been mentioned of the sphere of the court being illuminated. But it looks so like vanity to talk of one's self—one can't, however, help other people's talking; and I know, that some of the first, nay, I believe I might say, the very first person in the kingdom, has frequently quoted Lord Lapwing, as one of the most universal geniuses. Every body, I believe, will allow that great person's ability to judge in matters of science; did affairs of state allow him as much time, (though indeed they take up a great deal of my time too,) he might know as much, or perhaps more, than I do.

Miss Dan. More than you do, my lord!

Lord Lap. Nay, the thing is possible enough, though I have not met with it hitherto. But to change the subject, (for I hate egotism,) what

Lord Lap. He is indeed the first man, absolutely the first man, in his line, in Europe. He has adopted almost all my alterations in his chronology, and has displaced half his own medals to make room for mine.

Miss Dan. Were yours medals, my lord, or coins? [*Archly.*

Lord Lap. Both, both, Miss Danby, and he has arranged them—as I should have done, had business allowed me leisure. I haye been of some little use to the Doctor, and shall continue to do him all the service in my power. There are but two things I have reason to be displeased with about him:—He has placed the Lapwing family half a century higher than I gave him any authority for; and he has written a Latin discourse on my medals, in which he has introduced me much too often, contrary to my repeated injunctions. As I said before, egotism is what I would of all things avoid; the world talks enough of my name, my friends should spare it.—But here he comes.—My dear Doctor!

Enter Dr MUMMY.

Dr Mum. My much honoured lord!

Lord Lap. Is the discourse gone to press, Doc-

ter: You remember your promise of sending me the proofs.

Dr Mum. My lord, I have been making some alterations, according to your lordship's suggestions. That passage, which your over-delicacy insisted on my leaving out, I have expunged, in obedience to your commands.

Lord Lap. [*With an altered countenance.*] Why, Doctor, you were perfectly right, perfectly, as to me. I did insist upon it, as you say, positively insist upon it, and should still insist upon it, had I not, on reading it over again, been so struck with the Latinity, the Ciceronian Latinity of the passage, that I will submit to any thing rather than have such a morsel of language lost to your fame, and to the world.

Dr Mum. Your lordship rejoices me by the revocation. It shall stand as it was.

Lord Lap. Only for the sake of the Latinity; the *Mecænatem meum* is charming. Miss Danby, I ask your pardon; but though you don't understand Latin, you understand the feelings. Even to me, who hate flattery, the praise of friendship—

Dr Mum. The voice of gratitude only, my lord, or rather indeed of justice.

Miss Dan. I comprehend it perfectly, my lord. To delicate feelings,—to that fine-toned sensibility, which appropriates to itself, which, as it were, transfuses the soul of sympathy!—like your lordship's, or Lady Dormer's.

Enter Lady DORMER.

Lady Dor. Talking of my feelings, Danby—My lord, your most obedient—they are monstrously disarranged this morning. I was kept up so late at Lady Squeeze's, lost my money to I don't know whom; Sedley and his party disappointed me, and did not come; so I was obliged to countermand our philosophers, Lord Lapwing.

Lord Lap. If your ladyship was so unfortunate, a little philosophy might have been useful.

Lady Dor. No; for putting one in humour again, a little flattery does ten times better. So I gave orders to let in Dr Honeycomb, when he calls with his dedication.

Lord Lap. His dedication! of what? to whom?

Lady Dor. To me. The sweetest sermon! Preached to a charity, to which I am a contributor. I gave ten guineas to the charity, and am

to subscribe one hundred to the Doctor, for twenty copies of his sermon.—"When the eye of beauty"—No, that was not it.—Danby, you can recollect the passage; something about beauty.

Miss Dan. Your ladyship has reasons for forgetting it.—"The gem of compassion," said the Doctor, "in the eye of beauty! the ruby of animated feeling on her cheek!"—

Lord Lap. Yes, yes, Miss Danby, I remember it perfectly. I too am a contributor, and sat in the gallery, opposite to your ladyship.—"When elevated rank," said the Doctor, "serves to illustrate native dignity of mind! When genius unites her honours with those of station, and benignity sheds a radiance on both! When"—

Lady Dor. [*Looking in a Mirror.*] Danby, this cap is horridly awry; come, and help me to adjust it. [*Exeunt Lady* DORMER *and Miss* DANBY.

Lord Lap. Her ladyship's attention is a little dissipated this morning.

Dr Mum. I am ashamed of the flattery, which men of letters sometimes pay to rank and fortune. Women of old had their province better assigned, and left philosophy and science to masculine understandings, like your lordship's.

Lord Lap. Why, now-a-days, science is almost come to the level of the ladies. It consists of trifling experiments, paltry facts, which any body may understand. No theory that generalizes, no system that concentrates. I gave a specimen, some years ago, at Cambridge, of such a system; and, among those few, who had abilities to comprehend it, it has been admired ever since. They called it Lapwingism before I left the university. —But here come Sir Charles Dormer and Mr Sedley. Doctor, shall I set you down at your lodgings?

Dr Mum. I humbly thank your lordship; but I have an appointment at the Museum. Your lordship's most obedient humble servant.

[*Exit Dr* MUMMY.

Lord Lap. Sir, your servant.—That man has an eye for excellence.

Enter Sir CHARLES *and* SEDLEY.

Sir Char. Still on ancient ground, my lord! I thought you had at last taken compassion on your contemporaries, and studied something for the good of the present age.

Lord Lap. Sir Charles, I wish this age very well, and do not forget it amidst my admiration of the past. It does produce some men, that will be remembered; talked of, I believe, when the present time shall have become the antiquity of future centuries.

Sir Char. I have heard of your late tour; Mr Sedley and I were just speaking of it.

Sed. Who, I, Sir Charles! what tour?

Lord Lap. Mr Sedley is discreet, I see, and does not talk rashly. Indeed you could have scarce heard of it from any body but the minister. It will be more heard of against the meeting of Parliament. I have a little sketch of my expedition here—[*Taking a Paper from his Pocket.*] No, this is not it; this is a paper of hints for a new tax, if the exigencies of the state should require it.

Sed. A new tax, my lord! Upon what article?

Lord Lap. Upon *wigs.* I have got most of the necessary calculations. I am only a little imperfect in the female branch, where it will be difficult to prevent smuggling.

Sir Char. Very difficult, my lord; and the survey will be a matter of some delicacy.

Lord Lap. We are aware of that, and shall probably have a clause of composition for the ladies. Gad so! I had almost passed [*Looking his Watch*] the hour of an appointment; a meeting of some consequence.—Sir Charles, you will excuse me.—Mr Sedley, your most obedient. My friend, Sir Charles, mentioned you to me; I know the promise of your abilities, and if you wish for my advice in their direction, I can refuse nothing to Sir Charles and Lady Dormer.

[*Exit Lord* LAPWING.

Sir Char. Dost know this lord, Sedley?

Sed. Hardly at all, though he does me the honour to offer me his advice.

Sir Char. Oh! he offers every body advice; but he asks no fee for't: on the contrary, I have found him a *ways-and-means* man to me, with no other tax than a little tribute to his vanity. The world is full of rogues and fools; a wise man must accommodate himself to both.

Sed. That accommodation I find it difficult to reconcile myself to; yet often, from a silly sort of shame, I submit to it, till a better sort of shame takes me to task for having done so.

Sir Char. That cure of shame is worse than the disease. You must do it on principle, my dear Sedley. You know how much I love you; and, to say truth, I am proud of such a young fellow for my relation,—that is, of a young fellow who may be made so much of; for at present, Sedley, with your college and country notions of principle, as you call it, virtue, feeling, and so forth, if it is not to be laughed at, you are absolutely fit for nothing.

Sed. To be laughed at, Sir Charles!

[*With a mixture of shame and peevishness.*

Sir Char. Yes, positively to be laughed at. You must excuse me; I am too much interested in you not to speak plainly. Why, yesterday, now, when some men of the first fashion were here, to whom I introduced you as my relation and particular friend, and when, from my account of you, you had the fairest chance of being *accueilli*, how you marred every thing by the most bizarre sort of behaviour

Sed. My behaviour, Sir Charles!

Sir Char. Why, yes. You remember the scene —Here stood my lord, with one of Lady Dormer's telescopes for a cricket-bat, giving an account of

the great Kentish match:—the colonel, in his way, with his hat half on; one leg over t'other, with the boot rumpled down, looking at that leg, and picking his teeth with a poem of Distich's rolled up into a tooth-pick:—while little Helston, out of pure friendship for me, was entertaining you, in particular, with a narrative of the last Newmarket meeting, and describing the very spot where his boy jostled Demosthenes:—you got, Lord knows how! among the Grecian commonwealths, and talked of the genius of Athens, and the virtue of Lacedemon.

Sed. Why, I got there, Sir Charles, I suppose, as naturally as Mr Helston got to Newmarket.

Sir Char. Oh! it was Christ-Church to a degree! But when I had brought you off there, a few minutes after, when my lord told us of the little opera *figurante* he had bribed from the Count, you lugged in a lamentable story of a girl, a Dorsetshire parson's daughter, for whom a subscription had been set on foot by that ridiculous old man, who makes such a pother with his benevolence, in Portman-square.—Had you seen how I blushed for you!

Sed. I—I do remember something of it. But—I am not sure if I was the person who deserved to be blushed for.

Sir Char. Why, Ned, you blush yet at the remembrance of it. Oh! believe me, these things are ridiculously *hors de place* here. They will do very well, if you have a mind to go back into the country to doze out life, the squire of your own parish; to be a pattern for the lectures of the old women, and a text for the sermons of the curate; to marry some dowdy, that knows housekeeping, and get a parcel of boobies to devour custard, and fatten on mild ale.

Sed. Spare me, Sir Charles, spare me.

Sir Char. Nay, this is mildness and mercy to what people will think and say of you. I feel it, as your friend, by anticipation.—You must feel it.

Sed. I have felt it but too often. I own myself the veriest coward to ridicule. I know not how it is,—let me have thought, been convinced, and resolved ever so much, the laugh of those around me always beats me out of my ground. What a happy man you are, Sir Charles, who can look the

world in the face, without blushing at the sneer of it.

Sir Char. Only because I give it no cause for sneering. You have as much, or more, in your power than I have. With your family, figure, fortune, every thing is within your reach, that wealth, or fashion, or pleasure, can bestow, if you will but shake off this dunghill clog, that sticks about you from the ridiculous plan of country education, which my good uncle, your father, adopted for you.

Sed. Nay, Sir Charles,—

Sir Char. Don't be afraid; I knew your father, and esteemed him. He too had been a man of the world, and thence drew those qualities, for which we valued him; but when age had damped his spirits, and impairred his mind, he peevishly resolved to bury you in the country, and gave you a cynic guardian, to abuse that life he himself had become too old to enjoy; that Mountfort, who was killed in India, and left his daughter a sort of rent-charge on his former pupil, Mr Sedley.

Sed. 'Twas but a debt I owed him. He had neglected his own affairs to take care of mine; and when unforeseen accidents, and abused generosity,

had wrecked his circumstances, he would not accept of any aid, which the estate he had nursed for me might have afforded him, but put on that sword again, he had so long thrown aside, and went to Asia to try to repair the wrongs of fortune to himself and his daughter. I were a villain not to remember him with gratitude!

Sir Char. You shall be as grateful to him as you please, as the friend of your father, as the steward of your estate; but for the model of your manners, my dear Sedley, let me intreat you to forget him as soon as you can. Mountfort, I believe, was a very good sort of man, in his way; but he was not originally of a rank to entitle him to judge of the conduct of a man of fashion. His daughter is a pretty girl enough, and should be taken care of. When the relation she lived with died, Lady Dormer did very right in asking her to this house. Her appearance is wonderful, every thing considered, and may pass any where.

Sed. Pass, Sir Charles! how you speak of her! Methinks I never saw anything more elegant, more interesting,—

Sir Char. But you have not seen quite so many women as I have, Ned. The girl, as I say, is well

enough; and there is a milk-maid simplicity about her, which a *country lad* might fall in love with; and, if he were not afraid of being downright ridiculous, might carry his attachment very serious lengths indeed.

Sed. And would it be so very ridiculous to be seriously attached to Miss Mountfort?

Sir Char. The most ridiculous thing on earth.

Sed. Indeed!—to think of her for a wife?

Sir Char. A wife! Pray what notions have you formed of a wife, Mr Sedley?

Sed. As of one who is to be a man's companion for life.

Sir Char. Ha! ha! ha! You have never been married, Ned. A wife is a woman, who is to take a man's name, and may chance, during the first year or two, to bring an heir to his estate; to do sometimes the honours of his table, (when the company is not too good for her;) and to let women, that might otherwise be scrupulous, come about his house. But as for his companion—I don't think I have exchanged a dozen sentences with Lady Dormer these three months.

Sed. Indeed! You must be a very happy couple, Sir Charles.

Sir Char. For that very reason; we are never *genés* with one another. Lady Dormer is a woman of fashion, and does her husband no discredit by her appearance, or her society. She brought him a fortune that did no discredit to his good sense; and though she spends a little more of it than he could wish, yet it is in such a way as does no discredit to his taste. Had I married a pretty, poor, unknown girl, like Julia Mountfort,—Oh God! oh God!—I should have hanged myself, at the end of the honey-moon, out of mere shame for my folly.

Sed. Would it be so mortifying a connection?

Sir Char. Disgraceful beyond measure, believe me. Yet a man may be fond of the girl, in a thoughtless way, and not forfeit his character. He may talk of her, talk to her, flirt with her,—What a grave reproving face you have on, Ned! Come, come, I am answerable for your figure in life, and reckon my honour engaged, that you shall come to something worthy of you. You shall dine with me at the club to-day, with men fitted to lead and to enjoy the world. If I did not think there were capabilities about you, I would not venture to introduce you. But put off that monkish look, that

we may get in without being laughed at. 'Sdeath! a fellow of three-and-twenty, with an estate of seven thousand a year!

Sed. You shall teach me to enjoy it.

Sir Char. Yes, if you're not afraid of the ghost of Mr Mountfort.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE—*At Sir* CHARLES DORMER'S.

Enter SEDLEY. *He speaks to a Servant in entering.*

Miss Mountfort is gone out, you say.—I am sorry for it; because methinks I could speak to her just now with more ease than ever I did in my life. Why, what is Julia Mountfort, that Sedley should not speak to her with all the ease in the world? An orphan girl; the daughter of one nobody knew, without friends, fortune, or pretensions. Sir Charles is in the right—but then—left thus by her father, who, dying, thought of Sedley's honour, his generosity, his gratitude—herself, that gentle, elegant—shaded by affliction dignified by her sorrows!— [*He walks with a lengthened and agitated step.*] Why should I be

ashamed of virtue and of happiness? I will be a coward thus no longer. I wish I knew where to find her; this champaign is so very good a thing, that I don't see why it should not inspire goodness and generosity, as well as folly and dissipation. I am to dine again at the club to-morrow; my Lord Modely is to be there, to whom Sir Charles introduced me to-day.—"The first man in wit as in rank," said Sir Charles, "with such a girl for a daughter, Ned! but I had forgot, that you have no eyes for any woman but the little Mountfort."—The *little* Mountfort!—Let me read this card again, which they brought me at the club; it said something of Mountfort, but I had not time to think of him then.—"Captain Wilkins, newly arrived from India, - - - - friend of the late Colonel Mountfort, - - - - wishes to see Mr Sedley, - - - - and will do himself the pleasure of waiting on him."—Does he come to school me, as the pupil of his friend?—I shall be pointed at as only a bigger boy, whom Mountfort is still to govern by his executor.

Enter TOM.

Tom. Sir, there is a gentleman below, enquiring for Miss Mountfort. He had called and left a

none for her before. His name is Wilkins. He asked where you were to be found; so I told him, I believed you were here. Do you choose me to shew him up?

Sed. Certainly. And yet—You expect your master every minute?—I had rather see him at my own house—or stay—I will see him now. A Captain Wilkins, you say?

Tom. So he calls himself, sir; but, from his appearance, and the civility of his manner, I should rather suppose him a subaltern.

Sed. A subaltern! And what right has such a man—

Tom. Sir, if you have the smallest disinclination to see him, I can dismiss him in a moment. He looks like one whom I can treat without any ceremony.

Sed. No, no, shew him up, while I am in the humour of seeing him as I ought to do. [*Exit Tom.*] Now for an exercise in the science of Sir Charles and his friends. This Wilkins shall see that I am not the vulgar, sober, whining thing he may have been taught by Mountfort to imagine me.—He comes!—His countenance is one that should be respected, something of Mountfort's

own venerableness about it. I could play the fool, and be afraid of offending that face—the remembrance of Sir Charles, and the spirit of his champaign assist me! [TOM *introduces* WILKINS; SEDLEY *looks at him, at first with a complacency, which, immediately after, he checks with an affected indifference and haughtiness of air.*] Have you any commands, sir?

Wil. [*With an agitated voice.*] If I mistake not, sir,—you are Mr Sedley. You do not know me?

Sed. Sir, I never had the honour of seeing you before. Your name is Wilkins, I am told; you are lately come from India, and have some business relating to—to a person I had some acquaintance with—Mr Mountfort, I think.

Wil. [*With a look of surprise.*] Yes, sir.—Some acquaintance with!—Your pardon, sir, I thought he had been on a very intimate footing with you; the friend of your father, I have heard him say.

Sed. Why, yes, sir; I believe he was an intimate acquaintance of my father's. My father lived in the country, and had all sorts of acquaint-

ance. I have heard him talk very well of Mr Mountfort.

Wil. I have heard Mountfort talk of him—of you too, sir, if you be really Mr Sedley. I have heard him often pronounce that name with the tears of affection in his eyes.

Sed. Did he indeed! Did he talk of Sedley! He—he—he did me honour.

Wil. Honour! He loved you as his son. He once was a sort of father to you; was he not, Mr Sedley?

Sed. He was, he was, sir!—that is, sir—when a boy, I was placed under his care; a kind of tutor, sir; I was indebted to him for a great deal of good learning, which now it will cost me nearly as much time to forget, and a great many good sentiments, which—

Wil. Which, I presume, sir, you have forgotten already.

Sed. They do not suit me quite so well now as then. A man, in certain circumstances, Mr Wilkins, must accommodate himself to those around him. Mr Mountfort was—a very good sort of man in his way, but not quite fit to model the

manners of a man of fashion, and of the world. I think of him with all possible esteem, but—

Wil. He thought of you, Mr Sedley, with something more than esteem, in those last moments, when only those are thought of on whom the bursting heart relies for peace and consolation.

Sed. The bursting heart! The heart of Mountfort! You saw him die, then! and he remembered me!—I shall forget myself, and be a boy again. [*Aside. A loud rap is heard at the Door.*] Sir Charles!—just in time to relieve me!—Sir, I believe there is company coming to interrupt us. You will be kind enough to signify the business, which has procured me the honour of this visit.

Wil. I should have thought, sir, (pardon me for the mistake,) that merely to have indulged a remembrance of Mountfort, would have made a visit from his friend a kindness: but mine, sir, (since you will have it so,) is a visit of business. Left by Mr Mountfort a joint guardian with you of his daughter, I come to ask what is left for my duty to my deceased friend to perform; in what situation that daughter is; in what state the business of our trust?

Sed. Business, sir! I have the misfortune not to understand business. It may do very well for some gentlemen; but I have neither time nor inclination for it. I fancy, sir, you are not sufficiently acquainted with my situation. I am not what I was when your friend Mr Mountfort left England.

Wil. I believe not, I believe not, sir. Mountfort left you—as he told me,—with every virtue warm in your heart, every talent opening in your mind; with genius and abilities above the insignificance of fashion, the littleness of grandeur, or the vulgar pride of wealth; with benevolence, generosity, and feeling, to adorn that station which they enabled you to fill, to dignify that fortune which they taught you to enjoy.

Sed. You—you talk this well, Mr Wilkins; but you will give me leave to tell you, that though this, like his Greek, may be understood by a lad at college, such as I was when Mr Mountfort left me, yet, for a young man of fortune and fashion, all this is quite out of place. Sir Charles Dormer, I believe, is waiting for me below; if you will leave your card with the porter, I will send my

man of business to talk with you on the affairs of Mr Mountfort.

Wil. Sir, it is with you I would speak of Mr Mountfort, or of Miss Mountfort rather; a subject too delicate for the interference of a man of business. Her dying father recommended her to my care. Unfortunately, I have little but friendship in my power, my fortune (never a large one,) having been lost in that disastrous campaign, in which Mountfort fell.

Sed. Lost! You return then to England without a fortune?

Wil. I return with the consciousness of having done nothing a man should blush for to acquire one. I return, I am proud to own it, a poor man; my virtue, I trust, unimpeached, my sense of virtue unimpaired. Miss Mountfort shall not blush for her father—father's friend, who, if he cannot make her wealthy by a participation of his fortune, may teach her the dignity of honourable poverty by his example.

Sed. Sir, I revere—[*Taking his hand.*] but, as things are now, sir, I am sorry—I am afraid [*Letting go his hand.*] your sentiments and example will want the authority, which a little more wealth

might give them. As for Miss Mountfort, she shall be taken care of. Miss Mountfort is—

Wil. Worthy of her father, I hope, and above dependence on the man who has forgotten him.

Sed. She is every thing that is charming!—that is for a girl of her opportunities; and when she has improved under the culture and example of Lady Dormer—

Wil. Of Lady Dormer!

Sed. Yes, Lady Dormer has taken her under her protection, since the death of a female relation, with whom her father had left her. When the society, to which that protection will introduce her, has polished her native attractions, one may, without blushing, be in love with her to desperation.

Wil. And how far, may I venture to ask, would Mr Sedley's love for her carry him?

Sed. Why, if he were the silly boy that Mountfort left him, very ridiculous lengths indeed; as he is, he will go as far as any man who knows the world can. He may talk of her, talk with her, flirt with her,—

Wil. With her! With Julia Mountfort!

Sed. You will excuse me, sir; I have no mind to quarrel on the score. I leave you to Lady Dormer to satisfy your enquiries about the lady. As to any other business, my agent shall attend you.

[*Exit* SEDLEY.

WILKINS *alone.*

Is this Sedley, and am I Mountfort? or is it a mere play we are acting; I borrowing a name, and he a character? No, no, no! 'tis but the common change which corrupted manhood makes upon amiable youth. The head giddy with the elevation of fortune, the example of the great, the adulation of the low; the heart debased from purity, from virtue, and virtuous feeling, by the grosser luxuries which wealth can buy, and the trivial gaieties which folly and fashion can inspire! I am fortunate in my idea of this assumed name, and will lurk under its cover a little longer. When Sedley has thus changed, what may my child have become?—It is impossible! it is impossible! Yet I will allow a parent's jealousy to overcome for a while a parent's fondness. As Wilkins, I will watch that conduct, which, as Mountfort, I might controul. If I can command fortitude enough for the deception, the distance of time, the change of

[illegible] as well as look, and the belief of my death, [illegible]—Heavens! she comes!

Enter JULIA *with a Letter in her Hand.*

Jul. [*After a pause.*] This letter, sir, which you [illegible] enough—pardon me, sir, its contents [illegible] much moved—The friend of my father! [illegible] dying—entrusted by him!—it is [illegible], very [illegible]; but when I remember!—[*She turns away in tears. When she recovers, she curtsies, and makes a sign to him to be seated.*]

Wil. Madam, I—I feel the reception one of the most interesting to me,—most favourable to [illegible]—such as Mountfort—I mean the friend of Mr Mountfort, the friend of his daughter—

Jul. Sir, I am greatly indebted to you. In truth, I have need of friendship, of counsel, of protection. Forgive me, sir; I think I speak to my father, while I address myself to you. I pass over the ceremonial of a first interview, and, judging of the nobleness of his representative by what I have been proud to hear of him, I speak at once to the heart from the heart; from a poor, orphan, unfriended girl, to one who can feel—Pardon this freedom, Captain Wilkins—

Wil. Speak to me, Miss Mountfort, with the openness, (if I may venture to ask it,) without the reverence, of a daughter; I will look on you with the tenderness of a father, without his authority. I know what affliction you must have suffered; I know there are distresses, there are embarrassments, which a mind, such as I believe yours to be, would feel, beyond the mere distresses of the situation.

Jul. There are many such, Captain Wilkins, which your delicacy must conceive, for I cannot speak them. Proud, wayward it may be, in my affliction, I have suffered even from friendship, from kindness, from compassion. Methinks you seem like one, who could pity, without pity's humiliating look; who could protect, without the dignity of a protector; who could befriend, without putting one in mind how friendless one is!—This is too much; but my heart was full, and there was something in your manner, Captain Wilkins, that drew its feelings from it. I am calmer now, and can question, as well as answer, more methodically. I understand from your letter, that my father left me a charge upon your friendship.

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Jul. This, sir! This cover is too valuable for me to accept of. I know my father's little fortune was lost in the devastation of that savage army, which he encountered. I have no title to this, Captain Wilkins.

Wil. You have, upon my honour! That note was the property of your father, and I only deliver it as his executor.

Jul. I know not whether to believe you. I have met with such generous deception before. The day after my cousin's death, I received a paper, inclosing a very considerable sum, with a few ill spelt lines, in a hand that could not be that of the sender, signifying it to be a debt, which the writer of the note owed my father. This I keep as a deposit, till I can find out the owner. Is yours of the same sort, Captain Wilkins? It will not offend you that I ask this. You know how my father felt, and will judge how his daughter ought to feel.

Wil. I declare, in the most solemn manner, that this sum was your father's. 'Tis in the way of business merely I deliver it.

Jul. In my pride alone I suffered in pecuniary matters, since the death of my relation made

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upon his mind, the depravity and folly, which had become habitual to him, soon overcame them.

Jul. Mr Sedley thus! Mr Sedley's mind licentious and depraved!

Wil. Even so: depraved not by passion, but on system; that despicable, selfish, unfeeling system, in which modern refinement has taught her votaries to triumph. I can make allowance for the wanderings of youth, when levity misleads, or passion impels it; but this cold apathy of vice so chills, so petrifies the heart, that neither returning honour can warm, nor awakened conscience rouse it.

Jul. But is Sedley's heart thus? Good heavens! what a world it is, if this be as you say, Captain Wilkins!

Wil. Believe me, it is as I say. In your situation, Miss Mountfort, you cannot be too cautious. Forgive the freedom of my advice; I speak as your father would, were he now alive to speak; I speak with a parent's affection, and a parent's fear.

Jul. I am greatly indebted to you, sir; and yet my good opinion of him was one of the few

comforts left me. I hope you do not rashly. I am persuaded you do not. I a ly indebted to you.

Wil. Your fond opinion of such a man ley, is one of the most dangerous opinions y hold.

Jul. Indeed! I had thought of him so diffe ly from others; so differently from the young who visit in this house—

Wil. In this house!

Jul. Why yes, sir, in this house. In spite of La Dormer's kindness, my residence here is by means agreeable to me. So much bustle, so muc gaiety,—perhaps, in my ignorance of high life, I might say, so little principle.—Nay, do not look so; I dare say I do Lady Dormer and her company in- justice. 'Tis but the levity of fashion, the gaiety of happy minds. But to my thoughts, melancho- ly and depressed as they are, this levity and gaiety are so discordant! The hypocrisy with which I am obliged to cover my affliction, is worse than the affliction itself. To weep with a sad heart may be borne; but to smile with a sad heart is terrible!

Wil. I shall fall upon means of placing you in a situation more agreeable to you. You must indulge me with a degree of confidence, to which, as a stranger, I am not entitled.

Jul. Do not call yourself a stranger, Captain Wilkins. The bearer of this!—[*Looking on the Miniature*] You are my acquaintance, my friend, my parent! You must be all to me. You have—you have taken Sedley from me.

Wil. 'Tis but for the sake of your happiness and peace. To disguise himself to you is but another crime, which his profligate society may have taught him.

Jul. I am infinitely indebted to you, I am indeed.— [*With a voice of distress.*] Lady Dormer comes. I would not be seen by her just now; her eye is so inquisitive, and I am so weak! Farewell, sir; be assured of my warmest gratitude. You will not fail to find me here. I shan't stir from home, till I see or hear from you.

[*Exit Miss* MOUNTFORT.

WILKINS *alone.*

I see her entanglement with Sedley, and her unwillingness to think of him as he deserves. I

too bad taught myself to believe hi
can scarcely credit the testimony
against the creed of my affection.
here was critical, and my disguise a ve
one; it has discovered Sedley, and m
his friends, the Dormers, to me, if in
need unmasking. But it is probable that,
they have not even such a shred of virtue
to cover their want of it.

Enter Lady DORMER.

Lady Dor. Captain Wilkins, I should
waited on you sooner, had I not understood
your ward, Miss Mountfort, was with you. Yo
conversation must have been of a kind too inte
resting for a third person to witness. I hope you
found her such, as you would have wished your
friend's daughter to be.

Wil. I found her appearance, madam, most en-
gaging; and what I heard of her sentiments was
not unworthy of it. I have more obligations to
you, Lady Dormer, on her account, than I will at-
tempt to repay in words.

Lady Dor. Oh! never talk of obligations, sir;
so sweet a girl as Miss Mountfort would do a fa-

your to any house she would receive protection from. We quite doat on her. Sir Charles makes me downright jealous by his attentions to her; and Mr Sedley, who, I am told, is your colleague, as a trustee for her father—

Wil. Mr Sedley, ma'am!

Lady Dor. Is so much captivated with his fair ward, that no other woman can get a civil word from him. They will certainly spoil the girl among them, if we do not prevent it.

Wil. Is your ladyship serious in this remark?

Lady Dor. Perfectly serious; I know nothing so dangerous as admiration—to a girl.

Wil. You will oblige me infinitely, by assisting me in preventing its bad effects on Miss Mountfort.

Lady Dor. [*Aside.*] So, I may gain credit with this serious gentleman, by preventing its bad effects to myself.

Wil. I see your surprise, madam, at my earnestness on this subject. But you know the peculiarity of Miss Mountfort's situation, and you will not wonder at the solicitude of a—of a guardian, to whom her father solemnly bequeathed a charge so precious.

Lady Dor. Sir, you mistake me much; I honour your solicitude, and approve your caution. I see, Captain Wilkins, you have that delicacy and sentiment, which one looks for so often in vain among the men now-a-days.

Wil. I have some old-fashioned niceties, Lady Dormer, on the score of female character.

Lady Dor. You look, as if you thought I could not understand them. But people are not always what they seem. One must accommodate to one's society; and the company Sir Charles brings to this house have none of the old-fashioned niceties you mention.

Wil. Will your ladyship excuse me, if I remark, that such company is somewhat dangerous, every thing considered, to my ward?

Lady Dor. Why, really, I don't know. If there is any one among them, whom I should fear, (entering, as I do, into all your delicate fears,) it would be —

Wil. Who, madam?

Lady Dor. One perhaps you would last suspect, —Mr Seeley.

Wil. From the character I had heard Mountfort

give of him, he was certainly one of the last I should have suspected.

Lady Dor. Characters, Captain Wilkins, change with situations. A young man, having taken possession of a large fortune, with the world of pleasure and fashion newly opened to him, must have an impregnable virtue indeed, if he can withstand the allurements of the one, or the example of the other.

Wil. Your discernment and good sense, Lady Dormer, exactly anticipate my conclusion. But there needed no theory for me to build my opinion of Mr Sedley upon; I saw enough of him today, to judge from experience.

Lady Dor. You would find him very different from what you might have expected.

Wil. Very different, indeed!

Lady Dor. But men are not always to be judged of from professions. His conversation would be full of sentiment and virtue.

Wil. His conversation did not contain a particle of either.

Lady Dor. Nay, he has a certain reserve in his manner, that might not allow him to speak in that style to you at a first interview.

Lady Dor. A duel! About a game-debt, or a dispute on the merits of a race-horse?

Lord Lap. Not at all; the parties never visit the turf, or the gaming-table. 'Twas on the subject of a lady.

Lady Dor. A lady! I thought you had given up quarrelling about us.

Lord Lap. Dr Mummy had got into a squabble with another antiquarian, which rose to such a height, as to be determined by combat. The subject was the complexion of Queen Mary. The Doctor maintained, that her hair was black; his antagonist, a republican, insisted, that it was red. They met, and had actually measured their ground: I was fortunately apprised of the affair; and with my assistance, the seconds compromised the dispute.—It was agreed that her complexion was *auburn*.

Lady Dor. A very ingenious decision.

Lord Lap. I think so; the hint was mine.

Wil. May I ask, my lord, in what manner the gentlemen were to decide their difference?

Lord Lap. With pistols, sir; they had taken their ground by the time I reached Hyde-Park.

Wil. Because, I think, a dispute of this kind should have been decided by a tournament.

Lord Lap. I protest, sir, there is much justice in your observation; it would have been more according to the *costume.*—Will your ladyship do me the favour to introduce me to this very ingenious gentleman?

Lady Dor. Captain Wilkins, my lord, a gentleman newly arrived from India.

Lord Lap. Sir Charles and Mr Sedley mentioned him, and I was just going to solicit the honour of his acquaintance.—You were taken prisoner, sir, I am told, by Hyder Ali; and I wished to learn, from one who had seen that great man, some particulars concerning him.—Lady Dormer, will you indulge me?—You have seen him often, sir?

Wil. Rather oftener, my lord, than I could have wished.

Lord Lap. I am not unacquainted with him neither. There are few personages of note, in any quarter of the world, to whom my enquiries do not reach. I have got some minutes here. [*Taking out his Pocket-book.*] It is my way to note down authentic particulars, from which I can af-

terwards speak with certainty and precision. [*Looks on his Pocket-book.*] "He was originally of a low rank: Hyder Nag was the name he was called by."

Wil. I believe it was, my lord.

Lord Lap. You will generally find me correct in my facts, sir. [*Looks on his Book again.*] "Hyder Nag; he was so called from his attachment to horses."

Wil. I believe not, my lord; he was so called from his original station in the army. Hyder Nag, in the language of Hindostan, means *Corporal Hyder.*

Lord Lap. Pray, sir, are you deeply skilled in that language?

Wil. No, my lord, by no means; I only picked up a little of it in conversation.

Lord Lap. I thought so; you may depend on the justice of my etymology. [*Looks at his Book.*] "His stature was uncommonly tall."

Wil. I think not; he seemed to me rather short.

Lord Lap. You have seen him sitting, sir; doubtless he would sit, when he allowed his prisoners to approach him. [*Reads.*] "Of a thin active make."

Wil. Pardon me, my lord; he was more than usually corpulent.

Lord Lap. He would appear so to your eye, sir, accustomed as it was to the meagre looks of the unfortunate captives, who were almost famished by his severity.

Lady Dor. I hope, my lord, we shall have no duel about Hyder's complexion; but Captain Wilkins and you don't seem quite at one on the subject.

Lord Lap. I am infinitely obliged to Captain Wilkins for his information; but there can be no dispute; my intelligence is generally too accurate to admit of that. [*Reads.*] "His revenues were immense."

Wil. Very great, I believe; he found them large, and had increased them by his economy.

Lord Lap. "Three crore, sixty-five lacks, four thousand three hundred and twenty-eight rupees, six anas, four pice."

Wil. My information was not so minute; but I thought his revenue had not been much above a tenth part of that sum.

Lord Lap. My information, sir, is always minute. I had it from a Scotsman, who had been

in Hyder's family, their master for the English language. [*Reads.*] "Six anas, four pice. His zenana consisted of three hundred and seventy wives."

Lady Dor. Three hundred and seventy, my lord! Good heavens!

Wil. [*Smiling.*] My information did not allow him quite so many.

Lord Lap. Mine was particular, and I could not mistake it. The Scotsman was a sort of dry joker, as most of his country are; he had a poor Caledonian conceit on the subject.—"Three hundred and sixty-five lacks, and as many wives." He called it *Hyder's Lament,* a lass and a lack a-day!

Lady Dor. Three hundred and seventy wives! that was lamentable indeed!

Lord Lap. We should think so in England, Lady Dormer.

Lady Dor. Your lordship has never ventured upon one.

Lord Lap. There are so few women fit to be companions to a man of talents. Had they all the accomplishments of Lady Dormer—

Lady Dor. Oh! my lord!—The man has some discernment, amidst all his vanity. [*Aside.*

Lord Lap. Or the understanding of your *protegée*, Miss Mountfort. She has a wonderful discernment for one of her age. She expressed her admiration of my knowledge, in terms of so much intelligence, and gave her decision so justly in favour of my system, against the opinion of Mr Sedley—

Lady Dor. What a conceited fool he is! [*Aside.*

Lord Lap. By the bye, that young kinsman of yours, Lady Dormer, is not what I should have expected from his education, or his character. He talked to-day at the club with a degree of confidence, and threw out some opinions so contrary to every thing that is reasonable or just—so contrary to mine,—

Lady Dor. I could not have supposed him bold enough for that, my lord.

Lord Lap. I could have excused his want of knowledge; that is an allowance I am often obliged to make in my intercourse with mankind: but I expected a purity of principle, a rectitude of sentiment.

Wil. So your lordship, too, found him defective in those qualities?

Lord Lap. Astonishingly so! They had drank indeed more champaign than perhaps he was accustomed to.

Wil. Wine only discovers the man, not makes him.

Lord Lap. I don't know, I always drink water; *my* reason is of too much value to be sported with. —Lady Dormer, I must wish you good evening. This hour I commonly devote to such of the fine arts as more serious studies allow me to unbend with; and one of the first harmonists of the age waits at my house a decision on his new work— "The Elements of Euclid set to Music."—Captain Wilkins, I shall be proud of your acquaintance; and when we can spare an hour for the discussion of India, you will gratify me extremely by a continuance of your information.

[*Exit Lord* LAPWING.

Wil. Your lordship will find me a patient hearer of yours.—I will do myself the honour of waiting on your ladyship again, to have some further conversation on the subject we talked of.

[*Exit* WILKINS.

Lady DORMER *alone.*

There is something unaccountable in this old man's jealousy of Sedley; but it is lucky for my arrangements in that quarter. What do they all see in that cream-faced girl? But when Sedley shall have learned a little more of life; when he shall have been taught to raise that fine, large, downcast eye of his to a woman like Dormer!—But is it quite right in me to draw his eyes that way? quite fair to Sir Charles my husband?—How the deuce now did that word contrive to come across my conscience? the word *wife,* I'll be sworn, never comes across Sir Charles's; and, as a married woman is fairly entitled to the attentions of *one* man, if her husband is not that one, may she not try to find such a one for herself? This is what my philosophers call excellent *casuistry.* As Sedley comes from Oxford, there can be no harm in hearing him on the subject. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE—*As before.*

Miss DANBY *alone.*

So, this girl takes it into her head to suspect me, and to lecture Lady Dormer on the subject. What is this virtue, that its owners should give themselves such airs! As things go now-a-days—and a girl with nothing too! This old-fashioned virtue, like an old-fashioned gown, may be worn by the rich if they please; but when it is the best of the wardrobe, 'twill be looked on as a cast-off thing, and valued accordingly. But I shall be even with her, if my invention and Sir Charles's courage fail not.

Enter Sir CHARLES DORMER.

Sir Char. Well, Danby, you have seen this

Wilkins, and heard his intelligence about Mountfort?

Miss Dan. I have, sir Charles; his intelligence is such as we expected, such as you perhaps might wish. It will give you an opportunity to indulge those feelings of generosity, those sensibilities—

Sir Char. My dear Danby, you may spare your *feelings*, and your *sensibilities*, and proceed with your narrative. Politician as you are, you need not speak in cypher to your friends. Mountfort is dead, I suppose, as we were told, and has left this girl a beggar.

Miss Dan. 'Tis even so, Sir Charles; but I can't immediately put off this cant, which I am obliged to use to the dupes of it. By the help of this high-flown style, I have got into the good graces of this same Wilkins, who seems to be as honourable and sentimental as the best of us. He told me, that his friend Mountfort had fallen like a soldier, and left his daughter nothing but—the remembrance of his virtues!

Sir Char. That's a legacy will be very soon spent, if there's nothing more solid to support it. What say you Danby, who know the world?

Miss Dan. Why, really, Sir Charles, I can't say; it is a legacy so few people now-a-days have to leave.

Sir Char. But this executor, this Wilkins, what situation is he in?

Miss Dan. Poor, I understand, like his boasted friend Colonel Mountfort.

Sir Char. So much the better; but has he virtues to be remembered too? or has he, like some other people, forgotten them in India?

Miss Dan. Determinedly honest, I am afraid, at least if I may judge from his conversation with me.

Sir Char. If he talks much of honesty, it is three to one against his being honest.

Miss Dan. But the man, who returns poor from India——

Sir Char. That's an argument, to be sure; yet there are unlucky fellows, who are poor every where. I may be of use to him in making another voyage more successfully.

Miss Dan. I prepared him to think well of you; mentioned your wealth, your influence, employed in the purposes of generosity.

Sir Char. Thank you, my good Danby, heartily. And how did he take this *eloge* you made of me?

Miss Dan. He said, he had heard of your kindness to Miss Mountfort, and felt it gratefully; that she had inherited but few friends from her father, and some of those few she had lost.

Sir Char. Then, she should get new ones as fast as possible. Did you let him know what an intimate friendship I am willing to cultivate with her?

Miss Dan. I must take some favourable time for that; I durst not, at our first interview, go farther than I mentioned.

Sir Char. Then find an opportunity soon for a second. Tell him, I love the girl to distraction, and will think no terms too high for purchasing her good graces; that, for his friendship in the matter, my purse, my interest, shall be devoted to his service. If he is the sentimental fool you say, you may use an argument I generally reserve for the ladies;—that though early tied to a woman I have long been obliged to hate, the election of my heart is of Miss Mountfort alone; and that, if any opportunity should offer of dissolving those

ties, she should be my legal wife, as she is now the wife of my affections.

Miss Dan. Ah! Sir Charles, Sir Charles! how many of those wives of affection have you had?

Sir Char. Tut, they are all widows now; the affection is long since dead and buried. But for you, Di, I have a better feeling, friendship and regard unalterable. Make yourself worthy of them here, and you bind me to you for ever. I need not instruct you farther, who have such talents for business of this sort. I put myself into your hands to treat for me as you please.

Miss Dan. But I don't like the person I am to treat with: There is something very foreboding of a repulse about that Wilkins. We must set about it somehow, with a retreat in our power.—Suppose I make the proposition not in your name, but in that of young Sedley?

Sir Char. Of Sedley!

Miss Dan. Yes, of Sedley. It will be only making him do what he ought to do, had he the spirit of Sir Charles Dormer. If I see the ground clear, I can push the advantage for you; if not, it will do one part of your business at least, by ma-

king an irreparable breach between him and Wilkins.

Sir Char. Thou art a dear shrewd contriving devil!—I see the fineness of the stroke, but how to cover the game will be difficult; and a discovery might lead to something serious.

Miss Dan. You must throw boldly for such a stake as Julia Mountfort. But I think I could bring you off at the worst; and, being a woman, there could be no cutting of throats with me. If Sedley and this East-Indian should cut one another's throats, I suppose you would not die for grief at the loss. But you must prepare Sedley, while I manage Wilkins; keep him up to the tone of their last conversation. A little of your instruction will cure him of his country and college virtues, or, at least, make him hide them so carefully, that it will suit our purpose equally well.

Sir Char. Fear not as to him. I have so wrought upon his dread of being laughed at, that I can easily make him proud to seem as wicked as the worst of us, while I can keep his native honesty in petto for my own occasions. He shall bound and curvet like a *manege* horse, fierce to the eye, but docile to the hand; while I can be as much a *hy-*

pocrite on the other side, and put on that old-fashioned cloak of virtue and feeling which Sedley is ashamed to be seen with in town.—But, hush! our widgeon is in sight. Get you away to your business with Wilkins.

[*Exit Miss* DANBY.

Enter SEDLEY.

Sir Char. My dear Sedley, I have not seen you since the club, to give you joy. What a different thing you were there from the dull college Sedley I found you some weeks ago; so gay, so *enjoué*, so brilliant! I was proud of my cousin, and prouder of my pupil.

Sed. Did I really deserve so much commendation?

Sir Char. Oh, infinite, infinite! By the mere force of your genius, aided only by a little encouragement from me, you reached a point of excellence, which some people labour all their lives in vain to acquire. There was an ease in your manner, a flow in your conversation, a tone of fashion in your whole deportment, which looked as if you had never kept worse company than that which I had then the pleasure of introducing you to. The

Duke spoke to me of you as a prodigy; wondered he had never seen you before; and begged I would do him the favour to bring you to one of his *petits soupers* as soon as possible.

Sed. Indeed!

Sir Char. He did, upon my honour! You saw how much he relished your attack upon Lapwing; and, after the first bottle, your story of the monk, in answer to that grave fellow Mortimer, who sometimes gets among us I don't know how, quite delighted him. Did you not feel your laurels bloom at that moment, when the club was in a roar, and Mortimer blushed, and was silent?

Sed. I felt—that I was a puppy; and yet I was cheered on by the applause of the company, and the spirit of the champaign. I needed both; for I will fairly own to you, Sir Charles, the words often stuck in my throat.

Sir Char. For shame, Ned! never own it again. A man, and a man of fashion! Think of yourself more worthily, and let nothing stick in your throat.

Sed. Mine is but a false courage, kept up like a bully's, by the backing of my friends. I can't muster up the true one for the soul of me.

Sir Char. Were I to tell this, what a driveller they would think you!—What! lay to your conscience a few jokes on a solemn prig like Mortimer!

Sed. They were silly enough, it is true; but as profligate as if they had been wittier.

Sir Char. I believe, Ned, I must give you up in spite of me; let you go back to college, and put on your cap and starched-band again. You have a good well-toned voice for the Cicerone of old parchments and musty manuscripts, and will shew off in a Bodleian lecture amazingly.

Sed. A Bodleian lecture!

Sir Char. Yes, you may roost at quiet among the fat lazy flock of fellows and pupil-mongers; or, if you ever happen to come out for a peep at the world, like a strange fowl in a long frost, you will be an excellent shot for the raillery of your former acquaintance; and, dozing over a bottle of thick port at your return, may preach an admirable sermon on the looseness of manners, and the profligacy of wit.—But come, I see by your face that you are ashamed of yourself, and I may hope better things of you in future.—By the way, I had almost forgot to enquire about your behaviour in

your character of guardian to Miss Mountfort. What a lucky fellow you are, Sedley, to have such a girl drop into your mouth, by the whimsical choice of that strange prig, her father! Have you seen her since the arrival of this co-adjutor of your's? I suppose you will divide the business of the trust in our friend *Ranger's* way, "I take her body, you her mind."

Sed. If you would keep your proselyte, Sir Charles, you must not speak to me of Julia. There is something of a gentle witchery about her, that overcomes all your raillery; that turns my blush, at your ridicule and the ridicule of the world, into a glow of love, of tenderness, of generosity.—I saw her soon after our last parting. At first I thought of her as you had made me think, a poor, unconnected, insignificant girl, and had words ready in my mouth to treat her a little *de haut en bas*, as you had tutored me; but no sooner had she spoken, had she looked when she spoke, had she smiled,—one of those smiles of her's that are half made up of tears,—than I melted down again to a fond respectful—fool, you would call it. In short, with Julia Mountfort, laugh at me as you

will, I cannot, I cannot be a rascal, for the soul of me!

Sir Char. A rascal! At your time of life, with your opportunities!—believe me, Sedley,—and the women will laugh at you if you don't,—there is no such thing as being a rascal where a woman is concerned. Upon which maxim I must leave you to ruminate; Lady Dormer is coming, and it is rather unnecessary for us to meet at present.

[*Exit Sir* CHARLES.

Enter Lady DORMER.

Lady Dor. Mr Sedley, your servant. You are grown, I find, like other men of the town, a truant to your appointments.

Sed. Sir Charles had engaged me to a party of his friends, and promised to make my apology for not waiting on your ladyship.

Lady Dor. Sir Charles is seldom at the trouble of making any apology to me, either for his own neglects, or those of other people.—Was it not he who just now left you?

Sed. It was. He said, he thought it unnecessary to stay from business to entertain me,

when he left me to society so agreeable as Lady Dormer's.

Lady Dor. I would fain believe you speak sincerely for yourself, though I am sure you tell a story for him. Sir Charles's value for my society is sufficiently known; 'tis a piece of generosity that don't cost him much, to bestow it on his friends.

Sed. You wrong him, madam; I am confident you do. Sir Charles is a man of fashion, and must sacrifice a good deal to fashionable manners, and fashionable company; but,—but his heart——

Lady Dor. His heart, Mr Sedley! 'tis not worth the regret of losing; or, to speak more properly, of never having gained. Yet a woman, whose own was made for love, for tenderness, may think with sorrow of having found, in her situation, those feelings blasted by hate, or, what perhaps is worse, chilled by indifference.

Sed. The prospects of life, Lady Dormer, are always gayer than the reality. Yet surely you have so much reason to be happy——

Lady Dor. To be happy, Mr Sedley! it is impossible you should think so. You have a heart, I am sure, that must tell you how much otherwise

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Lady Dor. [illegible] Mr Sedley. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Sed. Indeed. Why then, Lady Dormer,—but you cannot be serious?

Lady Dor. Too serious, Mr Sedley! With some people, methinks,—with some people I could not jest in these feelings.

[*Looking down, and affecting to blush.*

Sed. If it be so, Lady Dormer, I—I think so fine a woman as you will have no difficulty of finding a Perseus.

Lady Dor. I don't know that, Mr Sedley. I am nice in my choice of friends; and in a situation of so much delicacy—I have gone already too far; but with you, Mr Sedley,—I think, upon such friendship as your's——

Sed. Madam, my friendship for Sir Charles,—for you, I mean,—for both——

Lady Dor. Sir Charles is little capable of friendship. But, for myself, I may venture to boast a return of feelings not unworthy of Mr Sedley's.—I know what, with other men, I should risk by the declaration.

Sed. With me, madam, you risk nothing.—I would not be so dishonourable,—and yet attractions like your's, Lady Dormer!—

Lady Dor. I have been flattered with the possession of attractions; but I heard the flattery of your sex with little emotion. 'Tis not with common-place souls that mine can vibrate. With your's, Mr Sedley, generous to forgive, and alive to feel my weakness——

[*She draws nearer to him; he retires at first, then disguises his uneasiness, and approaches again nearer to her.*

Sed. I—I am unworthy of your confidence, La-

dy Dormer; I am indeed. Yet if the most sincere—esteem,—if the warmest—friendship,—

Lady Dor. 'Tis on that, my dear Mr Sedley, I repose. [*Lays her hand carelessly on his.*

Sed. I cannot persuade myself, Lady Dormer, that you are serious. I am so little deserving—[*Drawing back his hand.*]—But yet—but yet so susceptible of your kindness—

[*Pressing her hand.*

Lady Dor. Susceptible!—Ah, Mr Sedley!

Sed. Think, madam, of the consequences!—[*Letting drop her hand.*]—Yet with those eyes for my apology,—[*Takes her hand, and kisses it.*]—Ha!

Enter WILKINS.

[illegible] Lady Dormer!—Mr Sedley!—I ask [illegible] back in quest of Miss Mountfort.

[illegible] Captain Wilkins,—Yes, every [illegible] in quest of Miss Mountfort.—Mr [illegible] in quest of her too. He has so [illegible] his constitution, that ha[illegible] it into his head to have [illegible] with me; and, if you had

not come in, I really believe he would have made downright love to me!—I leave you to take him to task for it. [*Exit Lady* DORMER.

Wilk. So, Mr Sedley, this is another part of the system of your new world.

Sed. Appearances, Captain Wilkins, are often—But,—[*Hesitating.*]—after all, what would your old world say to it?

Wilk. Possibly it might have said, that the man who abused the hospitality of his friend, and requited him for all his kindness by an attack upon the dearest part of him, his honour, was little better than a rascal, Mr Sedley.

Sed. As to me, Sir, I declare, upon my honour,——

Wilk. The honour of the new world, I suppose.

Sed. Sir,—[*Hesitating again.*]—Sir, since you are so little acquainted with that world, I must inform you, that, in the creed of us men of fashion, "there is no such thing as being a rascal where a woman is concerned." Upon which maxim, Sir,—Sir, your most obedient. [*Exit* SEDLEY.

Wilk. So, this house improves upon me.—And this is the woman who spoke with so much delicacy of Julia's situation; who warned me so much

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Wilk. [illegible] I have been [illegible] acquaint-[illegible] with Lady Dormer.

Jul. By Mr Senley, I suppose.

Wilk. Yes, yes, by Mr Senley; better acquaint-[illegible] with her than I thought I could have been in so short a time.

Jul. And with himself too, I hope? You know him better than when I saw you last?

Wilk. Perhaps I do.

Jul. And think better of him, I trust.

Wilk. Do you think well of him, Miss Mountfort?

Jul. Till you gave me some suspicions of him, I never had any doubts of his goodness. I have seen him since, and I confess to you I was half ashamed that ever I had entertained them. Had you been witness to the nobleness of his behaviour; had you heard the delicacy of his sentiments!

Wilk. I have been witness to his behaviour; I have heard his sentiments. In short, Miss Mountfort, I am perfectly satisfied with regard to Mr Sedley, and am grieved, rather than surprised, to find that he has deceived you.

Jul. But is there no possibility of your being deceived with regard to him, Captain Wilkins?

Wilk. I came to England, proud—I should say persuaded—of his virtues; prepared, from my former opinion—I mean the opinion your father had impressed me with—to think him every thing that was generous and worthy. I would have yielded this belief to no evidence less convincing than that of my senses. But when I heard him utter the most determined libertinism; when I saw him making love to the wife of his friend,—to Lady Dormer!—

[illegible] To Lady Dormer! Love to Lady Dormer! Impossible!

[illegible] absolutely certain, I assure you.

[illegible] The [illegible] indeed as unworthy as you can think him. But you will forgive me if I say I cannot believe [illegible] Would Lady Dormer allow such—

[illegible] Lady Dormer, like other fine women of the modern school, is not, I suppose, easily offended [illegible] the multiplicity of her admirers. Such being the situation of matters here, my friendship [illegible] excused for pressing your departure [illegible] I mentioned in my last note [illegible] formed. A distant female relation [illegible] who came to town to meet me [illegible] has consented to keep house for me [illegible] matters further; I hope to place [illegible] may consider as parental, far [illegible] the licentious world of fashion.

[illegible] I am [illegible] obliged to you; I am in[illegible] the only way in my [illegible] and confidence. I give you [illegible] Wilkins, for things which it [illegible] the—the imprudence of Lady Dormer, the [illegible]—the ingratitude of Sedley.

Wilk. I should not have asked your confidence on slight grounds; but certain as I am of mine, it is of the utmost consequence to your peace to trust me. I will call on you by and bye, and conduct you to my house.

Jul. What, without another meeting with—Lady Dormer?

Wilk. Lady Dormer is already apprised of my intention, and approves of it. To say the truth, I believe she has motives for that approbation I was not aware of; she was a little jealous of you with this same gallant Sedley.

Jul. Then, may not her jealousy have wronged him?

Wilk. Her jealousy had no concern in the matter; I found them here together.

Jul. Found them here together!—But I want no more than your assurance. I am convinced, perfectly convinced, of the propriety of the measure you advise.

Wilk. Believe me, it is of the last importance to you. I have been a father, Miss Mountfort; I am a father.—Will you permit me to call myself your's?

Jul. I shall esteem myself happy if you will al-

[illegible] the protection of one. Since Mr Sed-[illegible] —[illegible] matter—I go to prepare myself for [illegible]. [*Exit* JULIA.

[illegible] This unprincipled boy, I see, has [illegible] himself into her affections, and she cannot [illegible] persuaded to suspect him. I do not wonder [illegible] outraged as I am by his unworthiness, [illegible] yearning for him, which it is difficult to con-[illegible] —[illegible] here comes the lady whom I found so [illegible] in the morning. Every one I have met [illegible] and like true friends of the fa-[illegible] nothing less than my happiness.

[illegible] Miss DANBY.

[illegible] you opportunely, Sir. I have [illegible] you and your concerns.

[illegible] your conversation was on [illegible] subject.

[illegible] Captain Wilkins. Af-[illegible] in the story of your suffer-[illegible] help interesting myself in your [illegible] this freedom in one [illegible] a stranger to you. There are souls [illegible] anticipates time, and con-[illegible] at first sight.

Wilk. I am much obliged to you, Madam, for your good wishes; but I know not how I have deserved them.

Miss Dan. By your virtue, Sir, and your misfortunes.

Wilk. The system is a very generous one; but I cannot brag of my virtue, nor would I chuse to complain of my misfortunes.

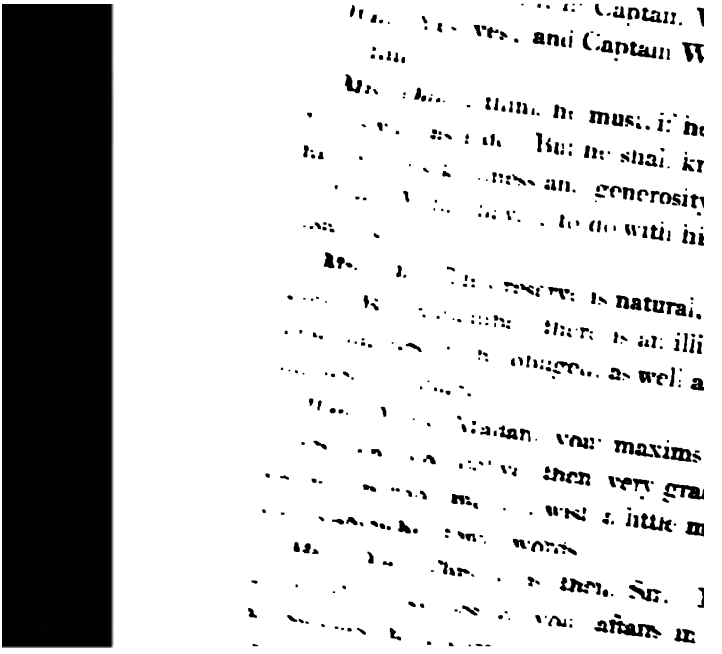
Miss Dan. But from others, Sir, I have heard of both. The world, indeed, is seldom just to merit, and often talks least of the most deserving. To you, I understand, it has been unkind: it is the pleasure of generous minds to correct its unkindness.

Wilk. I am afraid it is easier to bear that unkindness, than to correct it.

Miss Dan. As for me, heaven denied me the power, though it was liberal of the inclination. I have some friends who are possessed of both. It has been my business to make them your friends; Sir Charles Dormer and Mr Sedley, for instance.

Wilk. Mr Sedley!

Miss Dan. Yes, Mr Sedley; on whom blind fortune, for once liberal to worth, and propitious to virtue,——



ously. Besides an appointment, which he has little doubt of being able to obtain for you, if a thousand pounds or two will accommodate your affairs, or be of advantage to your prospects when you arrive in India, he has them at your service.

Wilk. Indeed! And what am I to do in return for all this generosity?

Miss Dan. To minds like Mr Sedley's, the consciousness of their own benevolence is the only return that is necessary; but your friendship, your good will he will naturally expect, and I make no doubt will obtain. One little circumstance he hopes for your compliance in; if you leave England, your ward, Miss Mountfort, will of course be devolved to his care.

Wilk. To his care! Ha!—Well, Ma'am, go on.

Miss Dan. That is, if you, as joint-guardian, have no objection to it.

Wilk. No objection to it!—But proceed.

Miss Dan. From regard to the young lady, I have been prevailed on by Mr Sedley to agree to her living with me. In my society I may venture to hope she will find some improvement as well as satisfaction, and she will have an opportunity of

[redacted]

messenger,—look you, Madam!—if she comes to me again on such an errand, her sex, which her baseness disgraces, shall be no protection to her; she shall go out of the house a shorter way than she entered it.

Miss Dan. Sir, I despise the grossness of your mind, and the scurrility of your language. But as to that part of your abuse which belongs to Mr Sedley, expect the resentment of an injured man of honour.

Wilk. I believe his courage equal to his honour, and fear the one as little as I respect the other. But I thank you for unmasking his villainy, and for the open menace of his resentment. In the dark *jungle* of your villainous world, I would rather rouse a tyger than tread on a serpent.

[*Exit* WILKINS.

Miss Dan. So, I guessed what it would come to; I knew the man was a fool, from his poverty. His passion, however, is a fortunate circumstance; if he should meet Sedley, they will have no temper for explanation.

Enter Sir CHARLES DORMER.

Sir Char. Well, Di, what success in your embassy? Have you opened any door for negotiation?

Miss Dun. No door; I was threatened with something like a window. The man is mad, absolutely mad, in a calenture of virtue and honour. If I had not used the precaution of Sedley's name, you might have had your brains knocked out for your proposed kindness to his ward. As to me—but I shall find a way to requite his civility.

Sir Char. Was he so angry?

Miss Dun. Downright furious! but let his fury fall on Sedley.—Could we not manage so, as to let those two virtuous gentlemen knock their wise heads against one another? I can swear to his abuse of Sedley, and put it on grounds which the other will easily believe. You can manage the young man's dread of ridicule, so as to make him afraid of not quarrelling.

Sir Char. Ha! I understand you.

Miss Dun. I will prepare him for your tuition; I will rouse his anger, you shall awaken his fear of

shame. I believe he has courage for any thing but being laughed at.

Sir Char. You women, Di, have no restraints on your inclinations, no qualms to come across you in the progress of them. Would not this be going a little too far, to make them cut one another's throats, to make way for me to the girl?

Miss Dan. Your love, I find, is not half so sharp set as my resentment. But you think too deeply of the consequences; they shall but scramble on a point of honour, and give you an opportunity of running away with the prize in the mean time.

Sir Char. Shall I indeed?—that dear, soft, artless, bewitching girl!—To obtain her, Danby, you shall make me all the rogue you would have me to be. 'Tis her fault to be so bewitching, eh?—If this forbidden fruit will look so very tempting, 'tis not all the fences that squeamish morality can raise around it, that will hinder men of spirit from breaking into the orchard. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE—*As before.*

Miss DANBY *alone.*

'Tis past the time Sir Charles should have met me. If he should have repented now, and given up our design! those men of fashion are so indifferent about every thing! But yet he is the more likely to go on with this; 'tis but involving this young cousin and friend of his in a quarrel with a ridiculous old fellow, who should have died of the bile in India—a bagatelle not worth thinking of.—Ha! here he is, and with a face of business.—Well, Sir Charles?

Enter Sir CHARLES.

Sir Char. Well, Danby, *l'affaire est faite,* and

those two honourable men are to come to an explanation in Hyde-Park.

Miss Dan. I made my evidence pretty strong, and spoke myself into a passion against Wilkins, for his abuse of a gentleman so much his superior as Mr Sedley: I spoke myself into a passion, but I could not rouse Sedley; he seems to have learned your fashionable *nonchalance,* and took pretty coolly all that I repeated, and all that I invented, of Wilkins's conversation.—" I believe I behaved to him like a rascal," said he, " but one must not be told it." I took him on that ground, and spoke much of what the world would say, if he bore it tamely; then left him in a state of preparation for your handling.

Sir Char. I made use of the opportunity, though it went somewhat against my conscience.

Miss Dan. Your conscience! I thought you men of the *ton* were seldom troubled with the calls of conscience.

Sir Char. It will sometimes call on us, as well as on the vulgar; but we have the same advantage over them with it, as with other visitors,—we're not at home when it calls.

Miss Dan. So you [illegible] yourself to it on this [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Sedley, to the length [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Sir Char. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and base [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] He said he had heard [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of your [illegible] [illegible] written a few lines to Wilkins, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] I own, I was afraid of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] at your suggesting it.

Miss Dan. Oh! I knew I had put Wilkins into [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] any thing.

Sir Char. So it turned out; while we spoke, a very [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], in such terms as gave me an opportunity of representing it as a fresh outrage.

Miss Dan. While you were with him! that was fortunate.

Sir Char. Yes; but after all it cost me a great deal of trouble to bring it the length we wished; he was very unwilling to be led so far, and if he had not been a coward—

Miss Dan. A coward!

Sir Char. Yes, if he had not been a coward, he would have certainly declined fighting. After ag-

gravating the affront, as I told him I had heard it from you, and putting in strong terms the necessity there was for a young man just entering into life to get himself a character for spirit.—But then, said he, Sir Charles, I am afraid I was so much in the wrong, in the way I talked to Wilkins,—" In the wrong," said I, interrupting him, " that is just the reason, my dear Sedley—There lies the very point of honour with us; and if you don't stand to it now, you will be shewn about as an overgrown booby, that must still be whipt into his duty." In short, I frightened him so, that he went home as fast as he could, in order to send this cartel to Wilkins. I saw his valet de chambre, with the billet in his hand, enquiring of one of my servants, where the gentleman from India was to be found?

Miss Dan. So then, we have cut out employment for them; now, Sir Charles, I have laid out employment for you.

Sir Char. Some very honourable employment, I'll be sworn.

Miss Dan. If you don't like the business, you may let it alone, that's all. If you are an honour-

able coward, like Sedley, you may perhaps decline a private meeting with Julia Mountfort.

Sir Char. How, private! with her, with Julia! where?

Miss Dan. At my house, if you dare venture yourself alone with her.

Sir Char. At your house!

Miss Dan. Yes; I have discovered an appointment with Wilkins, who is to come privately in the evening, and take her away from your house in a hackney coach. The young lady knows nothing of my quarrel with him, so I can easily contrive to be proxy for her guardian on that occasion; and I have a friend, who sometimes borrows a coach for such frolics, who will drive where I bid him. If you can meet her in my parlour at ten, we can have a little supper together. But I suppose you are engaged, and can't come.

Sir Char. Come!—Thou dear delicious plotter! let me kiss thee for the thought.

Miss Dan. Nay, nay, keep your kissing till there be occasion for it. I will endeavour to prepare the lady for receiving you favourably; but a great deal will depend on yourself. Be sure to put enough of sentiment, and feeling, and honour,

and virtue.—Ha! there is Sedley's old-fashioned footman, who comes only on important messages. —Get you away, Sir Charles, till I examine him a little. I have got myself mightily into favour with him, by speaking of the good old times at Sedley-Hall, and making him presents of Thomas-a-Kempis, and the Whole Duty of Man, for Sunday's reading in the country.

[*Exit Sir* CHARLES.

Miss DANBY, *to* WILLIAM, *as he enters.*

Come this way, honest William, here is nobody but I. How is it with you, my good friend?—You look purely.

Will. Much at your service, my good madam; much at your service always.

Miss Dan. How fresh and hale you are! Thus it is with people, who have lived soberly and virtuously in their youth.

Will. Thank God, I keep tolerable health; but this same town does not agree with me. There is such a noise and a bustle, a running here and a whisking there, a rattling of carriages in the streets, and a thundering of knockers at the door, it makes my poor old head dizzy to hear it.—And

then the late hours are the worst of all—seldom at home till two or three in the morning—and sometimes my master is just going to bed at the hour we used to rise at Sedley-Hall, when I first served as valet; and when I pass our neighbour Lady Squeeze's door at noon, I am laughed at by half-a-dozen lazy footmen yawning themselves awake on the steps in their slippers and papillots.

Mrs Jen. But you don't keep these late hours; you don't sit up for your master, sure? his new travelled valet de chambre, I should suppose, would have that office; he is younger, and more used to the business.

Wil. Why, so he is; but I don't know how, I cannot go to sleep, till I see my master safely come home. And though he chides me for waiting, yet methinks he likes me about him as well as Jenkins. Jenkins, to do him justice, is a clever handy lad, and fits our young master, for going abroad, to a nicety. He knows the town so well, and looks so spruce and so neat, and talks French so glibly. But when master gets home, he takes somehow more kindly to old William, plain and clumsy as he be. Jenkins is like his fine silk coat,

that looks so gay and sits so tight. I am like his flannel night-gown, which is an ill-looking thing to be sure, but then he can stretch himself in't.

Miss Dan. Then, I suppose, like his night-gown, you are his familiar dress. You will have the keeping of his secrets, William.

Will. Why, between you and me, I believe so; not but that Jenkins is trusty enough, but master can't be so free with him about some things.—'Twas but t'other day he went to visit a poor family, whom we had accidentally found out to be in a sad deal of distress. The father was an officer on half-pay, and had been arrested for debt. He had a wife, a pretty sweet-looking creature, and four as fine children as ever I clapped eyes on. My master, as I was a saying, went to visit the lady, to speak about relieving her husband. He told me the whole story; but, God forgive him! he let Jenkins believe, that he went to see her in a naughty way, and made him wait with a hackney-coach at the end of the street, that it might not be known where he came from.

Miss Dan. So Jenkins will believe him a sort of a rake?

Will. Yes, he says, he is too pretty a gentleman to be virtuous. And he laughed so at me, when I hinted the truth of the story. He had gone to the banker's for the money we paid for the poor gentleman in prison; and Jenkins would have it, that it was to pay what he called a debt of honour our master owed to a gentleman, whom Sir Charles Dormer had made him acquainted with.—But, Lord help me! how I stand talking, when I should be minding my business. I have got a letter here from my master, for one Captain Wilkins; I was told, I should probably find him here.

Miss Dan. I was told Jenkins was asking after him with another letter. Was yours written after it?

Will. Nay, for that matter, 'tis the same letter; and Jenkins should have been the bearer of it. But I changed messages with him; because I wished to see this Captain Wilkins, to ask about my poor dear Mr Mountfort, one of the best friends I ever had in the world.

Miss Dan. The gentleman who died in India?

Will. Ah! why did he die? He was a dozen years younger than me. But I thought it would be some comfort to me to talk with this Captain

Wilkins about him. I remembered him in my prayers,—in truth I did. I was praying for him, when he was dead and gone,—for his safe return to England; but he was never to return. Well, he is in heaven, if ever a good soul went thither!

Enter TOM, *who whispers Miss* DANBY.

Miss Dan. [*To* TOM, *who goes out.*] Shew him up, by all means.—Mr William, the gentleman you seek is below; I have desired Tom to shew him into this room. You need not mention my being here.—The family are not at home to-day.

[*Exit Miss* DANBY.

Will. Yes, yes, old as I am, I have learned to tell that lie in London with a tolerable face.

Enter WILKINS.

Wilk. [*Starting at sight of William.*] Ha! this is unlucky, but perhaps—

Will. I was told, sir, you were Captain Wilkins.

Wilk. Yes, my name is Wilkins.

Will. Good gracious!—that voice—speak again, sir.—I am old, but not quite doting yet—that look, too!—If it were possible—yes, sure it is he—

Wilk. Speak softly, my good William, and I will tell you.

Will. Yes, I am William, and you are, are you not, my own dear good Mr Mountfort?

[*Taking his hand, and squeezing it.*]

Wilk. Hush! we shall be overheard.

Will. Then I must not call you Mountfort? but—you are, you are—

Wilk. I am Mountfort, and the same friend to you I ever was.

Will. Blessed heaven! you are Mr Mountfort; alive, and well! But say, my dear good sir, how you are so. We were told you were killed in India—then to be called Wilkins!—Pardon me, I have so many things to ask.

Wilk. You shall know all another time. But—(there is nobody to overhear us,) I have reasons for wishing to be unknown a very little longer.

Will. Reasons for being unknown! unknown to my master, to your own boy, Mr Sedley! I remember the time when he used to call you father.

Wilk. I should be ashamed to have him call me so now.

Will. Why, to be sure, he is grown quite a man, and as proper a one as you would wish to look on. You would scarce know him now.

Wilk. His look is not much altered, William; but his mind is woefully changed indeed.

Will. How!

Wilk. Yes; he has exchanged those principles of virtue, of dignity, of happiness, I had taught him, for the libertinism of principle to which every fool can aspire, for the profligacy of conduct in which the meanest of mankind can rival him.

Will. Goodness bless me! you don't say so!—Have you seen him since you came home?

Wilk. Several times.

Will. And he did not know you?—Bless my old eyes! I knew you at once.—But he was no more than a boy when you left this country; and young folks are so giddy, and so forgetful!—And you are altered too; those hot countries so spoil a man.—Alas! we were told you were dead.

Wilk. So all my friends thought me; I am not sure, William, if it had not been better so. In my own country, I have found little a man should

regret to lose; yet, I forgot one blessing; my Julia is yet mine, and worthy of me.

Will. La! she is indeed, and the sweetest prettiest creature—my young master doats on her. And I had once hopes, that it would have been a match—they would have made the loveliest couple!—

Wilk. Then you don't think he loves her so much now?

Will. Why, I don't know; he loves her, certain sure; but these young fashionable fellows, that come sometimes about him, say, a man should not marry the girl he loves.

Wilk. Indeed!

Will. Why, yes; they say its quite an out-of-the-way thing for a man now-a-days to love his own wife. He must marry a woman, that brings him a power of money, which he'll never lose the fancy of, though it be his own.

Wilk. They talk so; Sedley's companions talk so.

Will. Yes; Sir Charles Dormer, and the rest. Now Sir Charles is such a fine man, and has such an air with what he says!

Wilk. Ay, 'tis that air, that gloss of fashion, which dazzles the shallow, and misleads the weak. I had hoped, Sedley was above it. But I will think no more of him.

Will. Think no more of him! of my dear young master! What has he done to offend you?

Wilk. Under this fortunate disguise of a borrowed name, I have had opportunities of seeing him to the bottom. Your innocence and integrity, my good old friend, would not allow you to suppose what I have found him; the irreverent way he talks of me, and thinks of my daughter.

Will. Is it possible! And can it be true, as Jenkins has often told me, that he but diverts himself with me, and puts on a face to deceive me! But I won't believe it of him. I have proof to the contrary; nay, for that matter, you shall have proof too. I have a letter here for you, that will set all to rights, I make no doubt on't. Before Sir Charles, and such people as Sir Charles, he will talk a little idly sometimes; but when he is left to himself, it is quite a different thing. Here is the letter; I dare answer for it of the right sort.

[*Gives* WILKINS *the Letter.*

Wilk. [*Reading the Letter.*] How's this! "The liberties you have allowed yourself to use with regard to me, - - - - a man of honour - - - - courage to justify"—Is this of the right sort, William? A challenge from your master!

Will. A challenge! for what?

Wilk. For a wrong of that monstrous kind, which he had no other way to vindicate. Those injuries, which neither reason nor humanity can excuse, a man of honour, like Mr Sedley, has "courage to justify;" like a detected thief, who boldly offers to box the passenger, who has found his hand in his pocket.

Will. A wrong to you! and a challenge for that! Could Mr Sedley do this?

Wilk. Taking me for the joint-guardian of my daughter, he had the profligate impudence to offer me a bribe to connive at his designs upon her; and, when I returned such an answer as the proposal deserved, I must answer to his *honour* for the freedoms I have taken with him.—It was something odd to choose you for the bearer of this.

Will. I was not the bearer of his choosing. His valet de chambre, Jenkins, was charged with that

letter, and we exchanged errands on the way.—But there is some mistake in this; I am sure there is.

Wilk. There can be no mistake—'tis his hand, I know it.

Will. He could not mean it,—on my life he could not.

Wilk. Why, William, you do not know these men of fashion.—This is what they call *selon les regles*, according to rule. Slight offences may be atoned many ways,—for very deep injuries there is but one reparation,—cutting the throat of him they have injured.

Will. But I say still, it is impossible that he could mean it.—I have another paper here, Mr Mountfort. You shall judge, when you have looked on it.—'Twas but just now he gave it me, with a look of earnestness, and bade me take care of it, for those whom it concerned. I ought not to mention it, but that letter so vexes me—[*Takes out a Paper.*] "Bond of annuity to Captain Wilkins, and for ten thousand pounds principal money to Miss Julia Mountfort."

Wilk. [*Taking the Paper, and looking on it.*] "Annuity to me! and ten thousand pounds to Julia!"

Why, this is odd.—An annuity to the man he was to kill, and ten thousand pounds to the girl he would have ruined!

Will. Lord, my dear sir! kill you! he could not mean to kill you, and provide for you afterwards. —And as for Miss Julia, I know something as to her, though I was strictly charged not to tell it to any one.

Wilk. Something about her! about Julia!— Give me to know it instantly.

Will. Nay, it is nothing you need be angry at. After the report of your being killed in India, and the death of Miss Julia's aunt, I sent, by Mr Sedley's order, a large sum to the young lady, with a few lines, telling her it was a debt, which the person sending it owed to her father.

Wilk. Pardon my warmth, honest William; but on the subject of Julia, I am so tender.—It was Sedley, then, who sent that sum to her! She told me she had received it in the manner you say, and keeps it still as a deposit for the owner.

Will. It was my master's sending; but he would kill me, if he thought I had said a word of it. He often sends money so.

Wilk. Nay, he cannot have conquered his na-

ture so far, as not to have feeling left. But it is not parting with money, which the habits of extravagance have taught them to undervalue, that entitles such men to be called humane or generous. Let them forego one favourite indulgence for the sake of humanity; let them sacrifice one selfish passion to the good of others, and then tell us of their benevolence and generosity.

Will. But he is not such a man as you think,—I am sure he is not.—Nay, do not look on that foolish letter.—You don't, my dear sir, intend to meet him?

Wilk. I do most certainly.

Will. Sure, sir,—sure, Mr Mountfort, you don't mean—

Wilk. Not to fight, I promise you, even were Sedley indifferent to me. He, whose blood is his country's, is not obliged to shed it at the call of every fool at home, who wishes to try his valour on him. But this Sedley!—why can I not forget my foolish fondness for him—unworthy, unthinking boy!—I will yet save him, if I can; throw off this assumed personage, burst on him in my own name and form, and try if Mountfort can yet rouse those virtues, which he once taught him to

value and revere!—Say not a word, I charge you of who I am, nor of your having delivered me his billet, but desire his valet to acquaint him, that I will not fail the appointment. [*Exit* WILKINS.

Will. But consider, my dear sir,—he is gone. I don't like this appointment;—my master is warm, and brave; and though I know he is kind and gentle, yet, since he has been in town, I don't know how it is, he is ashamed to be thought too much so. Suppose I spoke to Sir Charles Dormer; he is what they call a man of honour, and his advice would go far.—But then I dare not tell any body of this challenge, nor of Captain Wilkins being Mr Mountfort.—Ha! here comes Sir Charles.

Enter Sir CHARLES.

Sir Char. Honest William, I am heartily glad to see you; we meet much seldomer now than we used to do in the country.

Will. Why, here, an' please your honour, I am but, as one may say, an awkward piece of furniture. In the country I was something; I could tell your honour about the planting of trees, or the laying down of a field, when you had the goodness to desire it.

Sir Char. I found your conversation very useful to me, William; I have a great regard for you, and would be happy to have an opportunity to oblige you.

Will. Would you, indeed!

Sir Char. You may depend upon me. Is there any thing you would ask of me? for you seem to have a request in your face.

Will. Perhaps I have, Sir Charles.

Sir Char. What is it you would have me to do for you?

Will. Not for me; I am old, and shan't live long, and need nothing, thank God! nothing at all—But if you would oblige me, Sir Charles, (don't think it forward in me to ask it,) be a friend to my master.

Sir Char. Your master, William! Why, am I not his friend? his near relation, and his nearest friend; the most sincere one he has in the world?

Will. I know it, my good Sir Charles, I know it; but then friends here in town, I am told—your honour will forgive me—are not like friends in the country.

Sir Char. [*Smiling.*] And of what sort do you take a man's town friends to be, William?

Will. Why, I have heard, sir,—I only speak as I have heard,—that a man's friends here, will eat, and drink, and be merry with him, call him by his christian name, and profess all the regard for him in the world; yet will borrow his money, and never pay it, or win it at play, which is a shorter way still; will marry his mistress, or seduce his wife; and if he offers to find fault with any of these things, will run him through the body, or shoot him through the head. Your honour won't take it ill—I only speak as I have heard.—No offence, I hope.

Sir Char. None in the world, honest William; I like your description much, and will own, that there are many town friends, whom it suits. Nay, perhaps Mr Sedley is not without such, some of whom I have cautioned him against.

Will. Have you, indeed! It was kindly done of you.

Sir Char. Yes, there are people about town, and some who call themselves gentlemen, and men of honour, who make a prey of young men, like Sedley, who are open, generous, and easily misled: others there are, idle, dissipated, and profligate, with an air of fashion, whose society is more allu-

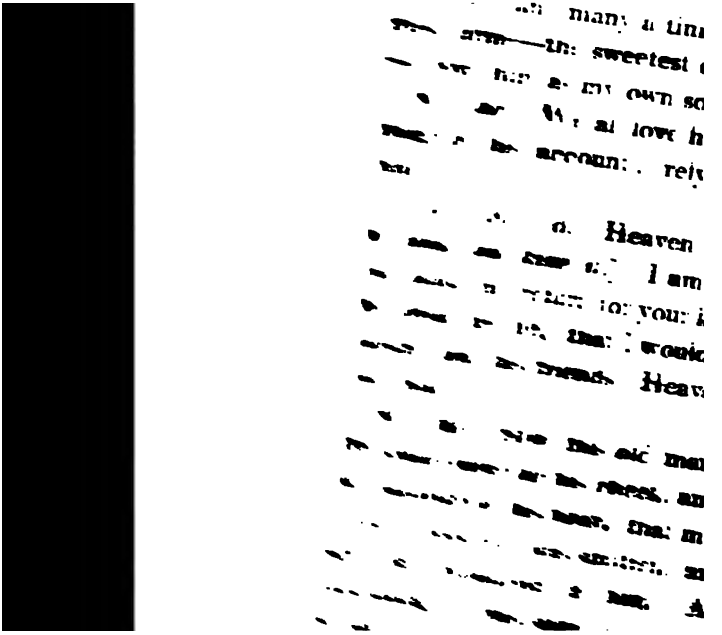
ring, and equally dangerous. But I think, if he relies on me, (and I flatter myself, I have some influence with him,) I shall be able to guard him against the practices of the one, and the example of the other.

Will. Heaven grant you may! There is a gentleman,—a very worthy—that is, I am told, a very worthy gentleman, who is joined with Mr Sedley in the guardianship of Miss Mountfort—should some of those idle young people you talk of sow dissension between him and Mr Sedley!—

Sir Char. Have you heard of any difference between them?

Will. Yes,—no, not a difference, that is, no particular difference; but I was told, that Mr—I would say Captain Wilkins, had said somewhat about my master, that is, about—about their ward, Miss Julia—that some of those hot-headed young men about town might think was not altogether so proper, and so—

Sir Char. And so you were afraid they might quarrel on that ground. They were not to fight, I hope, about the management of the young lady?



chased from them one such tear as William's. But the time is too busy for moralizing.—Sedley!

Enter SEDLEY.

Sed. Sir Charles, I was very anxious to meet with you. I wish for your counsel in an affair of some delicacy.

Sir Char. What! in your affair with Wilkins?

Sed. No, no, I will manage that myself.

Sir Char. With the assistance of old William.

Sed. Of William! What do you mean?

Sir Char. He left me just now, and I could see had been informed of your quarrel, which the old fellow begged of me to prevent any consequences from. 'Tis not our way here to communicate such affairs to the old men and women of our families.

Sed. How! I communicate it to old men and women?

Sir Char. Nay, perhaps, it might be prudent; but it is not the way with our young fellows here, and might be laughed at, if they knew—

Sed. Laughed at! I will fight him before I sleep.

Sir Char. Nay, it will be time enough to-morrow,—if it is not known and prevented by a peace-warrant before.

Sed. Leave it to me, I say; and if you find I want spirit, brand me for a coward and a rascal—though perhaps I am a rascal, as it is, and only justify it by being a bully. But no matter, let's talk no more on't.—I have another challenge, that puzzles me more.

Sir Char. Another challenge! from whom?

Sed. From a lady.

Sir Char. From a lady! and does that puzzle you? What a fortunate fellow you are, Ned!

Sed. I own I want courage for't.—But look not so contemptuously till you hear the circumstances

Sir Char. She is old and ugly?

Sed. Neither, neither; but she is married.

Sir Char. So much the better; half the puzzle is removed already.

Sed. It would be unfair to give a hint to find her by. But she is the wife of a gentleman—in the country—from whom I have received numberless favours.

Sir Char. And the lady, like a dutiful wife, would bestow a few more on you.

Sed. I have been infinitely obliged to her husband.

Sir Char. Then you must certainly oblige his wife.

Sed. I know, Dormer, my scruples will appear ridiculous to a gay man like you. I was weak enough, or gallant enough, to be ashamed of them, in an interview with the lady; and though I felt them so strongly at the time, that I often wished myself (don't laugh at me,) a thousand miles off; yet, like a puppy as I was, I spoke some of that nonsense, which a man thinks himself obliged to say to a woman who seems to expect it. On the strength of this encouragement—

Sir Char. Encouragement! Ha! ha! Nay, you must forgive me, my dear Sedley, for laughing; the phrase is so novel *from* a gentleman *to* a lady! —But I am serious again, and will hear your case stated with the gravity of a bencher. On the faith of this encouragement, as you call it, the lady has sent you, I suppose, a civil message by

[illegible] challenged you to a party at [illegible] convenient friend.

[illegible] meet her this even- [illegible] our conversation, [illegible] fortunately, as I thought,) the intru- [illegible] third person interrupted.

Char. What a lucky dog, I say again, you are Ned!

But I shan't go, Sir Charles.

Char. Not go! send me, then, in your [illegible].

That might not do so well. But are you [illegible] Should I feel nothing for the injury to a [illegible] has been my benefactor and my friend? [illegible] make him this return for all his kindness? [illegible] gratitude for his hospitality and his con- [illegible]

[illegible] *En fait d'amour*, Ned, gratitude is out [illegible].

[illegible] fashionable gallantry so selfish, so [illegible]

[illegible] never talk of remorse before hand; [illegible] enough to repent afterwards.

[illegible] lady perhaps—but have you no [illegible] innocent husband?

Sir Char. All the compassion in the world,—I am a husband myself. But it is ten to one he is an indifferent fellow, and don't care a farthing for his wife.

Sed. That is very possible.

Sir Char. Or perhaps takes his own amusement some other way.

Sed. Not unlikely.

Sir Char. Then he has no title to complain; besides, if the lady and you are discreet enough to keep your own secret, he will not be a halfpenny the worse.

Sed. You really think so?

Sir Char. Most sincerely. I know no families so easy, so comfortable, so happy, as those in which such arrangements take place.

Sed. Indeed! You advise me to obey the assignation then?

Sir Char. If you would not have me think you a ninny. But I have an appointment too, [*Looking at his Watch.*] which I must prepare for. *Bon voyage,* Ned. And if you have any scruples remaining to-morrow, come to me, and receive absolution. [*Exit Sir* CHARLES.

ACT V.

SCENE—*The House of* DIANA DANBY.

Lady DORMER, *(in a different Dress from what she was formerly,) and* LUCRETIA, *a Maid of* DANBY'S.

Lady Dor. So Miss Danby did not receive my card?

Luc. No, my lady, I did not know where to send it, and kept it in expectation of her return home.

Lady Dor. That was a little unlucky; but since I have had the good fortune to find you, Mrs Lucy, it does not much signify. It was only to tell her, I should call here according to her request; and that the gentleman, her friend, would probably meet me to concert the business we

talked of yesterday. On which account, it was as well she should not be at home to any body else.

Luc. Your ladyship might certainly command here, whether my mistress was acquainted with your intentions or not; but she told me of your being to be here this evening.

Lady Dor. Of my being to be here!

Luc. Yes; she said, that a lady, meaning your ladyship no doubt, was to sup here this evening, and a gentleman, a near relation of hers. I have prepared matters accordingly.

Lady Dor. That is somewhat odd; for the note I told you of was the first intimation of my visit—if indeed she has not happened to meet Mr—[*A single knock is heard at the Door.*] Hark! some one knocks below.

Luc. I will see who it is; but they will let nobody in except your ladyship's relation.

[*Exit* LUCY.

Lady Dor. Do I look as I ought? This is the simple modest dress he admired so much in Julia Mountfort—with that blushing sentiment in my face, which he said a woman—

Re-enter LUCY, *hastily.*

Luc. Madam, madam! did your ladyship know who it was you were to meet here?

Lady Dor. A relation, I told you, child.

Luc. But was it so very very near a relation?—Your husband, Sir Charles, is below.

Lady Dor. Sir Charles! good heavens!—But he won't come up hither?

Luc. He is just coming up, my lady.—I told him Miss Danby wasn't at home; but he said, he knew she would be at home by and by.—He is only giving his man some orders in the lobby.

Lady Dor. But you must get him away, my dear Lucy.—I will step into this inner room.—He does not know any thing of the business your mistress and I were to meet upon—and so you know—you will get him away as fast as you can. —Let me in here.

[*Going to the Door of the inner Room.*

Luc. La! my lady! that room—Sir Charles has a bureau with some papers in that room.

Lady Dor. Sir Charles a bureau in that room!

Luc. Yes, my lady, and so he has a key of it himself, and he will certainly go in there.

Room.]—How! masked! the devil! If Danby has succeeded so far in her *preparation*, as she called it—it almost takes away my appetite for the adventure. [*Lady* DORMER *walks to the other end of the Room.*] It is certainly she, notwithstanding—Her dress, her air, only a little agitated from the situation. [*Aside.*]—Madam! Miss Mountfort! [*Lady* DORMER *stops.*] There is something whimsical, I should rather say amusing, or, perhaps still more properly, compassionate in that mask, when you know what mischief your face does in its natural state. [*Lady* DORMER *walks about again in confusion.*] I see your agitation, Miss Mountfort, at this interview. My feelings Miss Danby may perhaps have in some degree communicated, though she could not do justice either to their warmth or their purity! Indeed my own language can but very imperfectly express them. [*Lady* DORMER *stops again.*]—Something very odd in this; but I will speak on, while she allows me. [*Aside.*]—I have wished, though with that trembling distrust, which the highest, the most ardent esteem always creates, for an opportunity of explaining my sentiments with regard to your situation and my own. Yours has been un-

fortunate perhaps, at least the world will call it so; the world, who does not know those qualities, which, in every heart deserving of your friendship, (for some, I am afraid, there are, who have much abused it,) will find a friend; but my situation, Miss Mountfort, is truly distressing! Formed for the tenderest sympathies of friendship and of love, it has been my misfortune to be joined to one who is perfectly unsusceptible of either; who, in the giddiness of fashion, and the tumult of dissipation, has lost all relish for that domestic enjoyment, which, had I been blest with one like you—Nay, do not start at the declaration,—you must have seen, though I was careful to hide my attachment, you must have seen how much it possessed my heart. There are souls, which, by an instinctive sort of impulse, involuntarily attract one another. At this moment, though you cruelly hide your face from me, yet thus to be near you, to touch this hand—nay, do not draw it away so harshly,—is such an indescribable pleasure, that if there exists that magnetic influence, which some visionaries pretend—[*A violent knocking below.*] Ha!—Don't be alarmed, Miss Mountfort; don't be uneasy.

Wilk. [*Below.*] But I know she is here, and nothing shall prevent my seeing her.

Sir Char. Ha! I think I have heard that voice,—but let it not discompose you, Miss Mountfort.—Yet, as the meeting might be too much for your spirits, be so kind to step in here—[*Takes a Key from his Pocket, and opens the Door of the Inner Room.*]—till I get rid of this intrusion. [*Hands Lady* DORMER *in.*]—Depend on my protection and support,—my unalterable, my inviolable attachment. [*Locks the Door.*]—This girl is a little unintelligible; but, though she seemed displeased, she listened to the nonsense I talked, and that is something.—Now for this impertinent intruder.

[*Goes towards the Door, and meets* WILKINS *entering.*

Wilk. Sir! Sir Charles Dormer!

Sir Char. Captain Wilkins!—Have you any commands for me, Sir?

Wilk. For you, Sir? Not for you, Sir Charles.—Where is Sedley? Where is Miss Mountfort?

Sir Char. Sedley, and Miss Mountfort!—I know nothing of Sedley; and as for Miss Mountfort,—I should ask that question of you, who are one of her guardians, and interested in the care of her.

Wilk. I am indeed, Sir Charles; and in virtue of that interest, I come here in quest of her.

Sir Char. Here in quest of her! I should not think this the most likely place to find her. I suppose she will be found in my house, if you will take the trouble to go thither.

Wilk. Come, come, Sir Charles, this is a business in which I will not be trifled with. I know she is not at your house; I know she is here, and Mr Sedley with her. Your behaviour may be fidelity to him; but, in such a cause as this, it is dishonour to you.

Sir Char. Sir, I declare to you, upon my honour, I know nothing of Mr Sedley.

Wilk. You speak this with such an air of sincerity, Sir Charles, that I, who am not accustomed to deceit, am inclined to believe you. But I know of Mr Sedley, whether you do or not. I know she was seen with him in a hackney-coach not a quarter of an hour ago, and that that coach was ordered to drive hither.

Sir Char. Indeed!—Is it possible that devil Danby could be playing false with me? [*Aside.*]—Are you sure of that, Captain Wilkins?

Wilk. So sure of it, that I am determined not to leave this house till I find her.

Sir Char. Together, do you say? Were they seen together?—I don't know what to make of this. [*Aside.*]

Wilk. I say again, Sir Charles, they were. Sedley may have deceived you, as, I fear, he has deceived her.

Sir Char. If she expected Sedley, her mask may be easily accounted for. She certainly seemed not to expect me. [*Aside.*]

Wilk. You seem surprised, Sir Charles; and, I own, I do not wonder at it.

Sir Char. Surprised, sir!—I have a great mind to discover her, and get to the bottom of this. [*Aside.*]

Wilk. But I trifle here. [*Goes to the Door.*]—This door is locked; but I come prepared. I shall find a way to open it presently.

Sir Char. Captain Wilkins, I sympathise with your concern for Miss Mountfort, and believe I can assist you in your search for her. There is a lady in that room; and, from what you tell me, I do suspect her to be Miss Mountfort. I should not have ventured to suppose it else.

Wilk. I am indeed, Sir Charles; and in virtue of that interest, I come here in quest of her.

Sir Char. Here in quest of her! I should not think this the most likely place to find her. I suppose she will be found in my house, if you will take the trouble to go thither.

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Sir Char. Indeed!—Is it possible that devil Danby could be playing false with me? [*Aside.*]—Are you sure of that, Captain Wilkins?

Wilk. In that room.

Sir Char. Yes. With that sort of gallant which every man like me must shew to a lady, without it you, Captain Wilkins, I meant to fix you her concealment there without knowing who she was, but feeling as I do, for this young lady, whom Mr Sedley,—but I will accuse nobody,—I should abuse this confidence I hope I have hitherto deserved from her friends, not to assist in undeceiving her.—There, [*Opens the Door.*] you will find your wart within.

Wilk. My mom, Sir Charles.—Yes:—But the daughter of Mountfort, I am ashamed to think,—

[*Lady* DORMER *comes out, still masked.*

How masked, Julia Mountfort:—Speak to her, Sir Charles, I cannot.

Sir Char. I am little less astonished than you, Captain Wilkins, that Mr Sedley should have contrived this strange suspicious sort of meeting; or that Miss Mountfort should have consented to it.

[*She attempts to pass them, and go out.*

Wilk. Nay, you must not pass. It is now the very crisis of your fate, and you must bear to be told——

Sir Char. Captain Wilkins, let me take the li-

berty of interceding for Miss Mountfort. There must be something here which can in a great measure justify her. One, like this lady, guileless herself, and unsuspicious of deceit in others, Sedley's appearance of virtue and honour might easily mislead. She will henceforward know her friends better, and learn to value their real regard. She will be taught a salutary suspicion of those, whose pretence of it might be fatal.

Wilk. And all this of Julia Mountfort! of her to whom, but a little since, I gave such a remembrancer of her father!—Is all this really so? or am I come in some carnival time, when minds are in mask as well as faces?—Off with that cover from your's, that I may look on the daughter of—

[*Pulls off Lady* DORMER'S *Mask*

Wilk. and Sir Char. Lady Dormer!

Lady Dor. Sir Charles, I—I knew this would surprise you, as, I confess, your behaviour has a good deal surprised me.—Captain Wilkins, I can easily account for this situation to you.

Wilk. Oh, madam, I can easily account for it to myself.

Sir Char. But you will be pleased, madam, to account for it to me.

[illegible] don't see the least occasion for [illegible]

[illegible] madam!—Your being [illegible]

[illegible] To meet you, Sir Charles. The [illegible] you talked of a little ago, I [illegible] here together.

[illegible] had better put on your mask [illegible] Dormer; it will save at least the ef- [illegible] behaviour.

[illegible] will restore the tenderness of [illegible] tive tenderness, which being [illegible] know.—But come, Sir Charles, se- [illegible] out of humour about the busi- [illegible] a little *brouillè* at present; but [illegible], when there is temper and time for it, [illegible] cleared, I make no doubt on't.

[illegible] Sir Charles, I must leave you to [illegible] them.—Captain Wilkins, your [illegible]. [*Exit Lady* DORMER.

[illegible] are sufficiently clear to me al-

ve [illegible] me. Sir Charles, they are not.—
tol[illegible] comfort?

S.

Sir Char. Not in this house, Sir, it would appear.

Wilk. And Sedley?

Sir Char. Somewhere with her, you say. But I begin to suspect, he disappointed another lady.—But here he comes to answer for himself.

Enter SEDLEY.

Sed. Sir Charles! I did not expect to meet you here.

Wilk. Nor me neither, I suppose, Sir?

Sir Char. Nor any *man*, I suppose, Sir?

Sed. You, Sir Charles, know me too well to doubt my satisfying you on any point.

Wilk. Satisfy *me* on the score of Miss Mountfort.

Sed. Miss Mountfort, Captain Wilkins—Sir,—[*Looking at Sir* CHARLES.] I have heard, Sir, you have talked rather warmly on that subject already.

Wilk. Sir, it is a subject I am entitled to talk warmly on.—Where is the young lady now, Sir?—

Sed. You will find, I believe, Captain Wilkins—But a gentleman, and a man of honour, is not at

liberty to answer to interrogatories put with such an emphasis.

Wilk. My emphasis shall not be abated, young man.

Sed. Young man!

[*Putting his Hand towards his Sword.*

Enter WILLIAM.

Wil. My dear sir, my dear master, you know not who it is you speak to.—You—I can't hold longer; indeed, I can't, Mr Mountfort!—Yes, sir, he is Mr Mountfort, the friend of your father, the protector of your childhood, the best and worthiest,——Won't you forgive him, sir?

[*To* MOUNT.

Sir Char. How! Mountfort!

Mount. Yes, lost and unworthy boy! I am that Mountfort, who loved you as a son; who hoped to find you worthy of being called so.—Of that no more;—it is past.—But answer to me for Julia; I have now a father's title to question you about her.

Wil. She is safe and happy; and owes that safety and happiness to rM Sedley.—Alas, sir, he is

not what he has seemed; and you may judge by his silence what he thinks of having seemed so.

Sed. Mountfort, I am indeed ashamed to look upon you; ashamed to ask your forgiveness. I have yet that honest blush remaining, for the part which my false shame for the sneer of the world imposed on me. Yet I was but a sorry player, and the hypocrisy of fashion sat ill upon me.

Mount. Where is my child?

Wil. We met her in a hackney-coach, with Mrs Danby, terrified at finding that she was not to meet with you, sir; in the belief of which she had been inveigled from Sir Charles's. The proposal that vile woman made to you, she confessed was not from Sedley, whose name she had the impudence to use; but from another gentleman. My master rescued Miss Julia from the base hands she had got into, and placed her in safety at Lord Lapwing's.—I go to tell them—Shall I not [*To* MOUNT.] tell them, that every thing is forgotten; that you are friends and happy? [*Exit* WIL.

Mount. That will depend, Mr Sedley,——

Sed. Give me your hand; if I am undeserving of your friendship, yet give it to my joy at seeing you; at finding you restored to life, and to your

country.—Of that feeling, at least, I can boast the sincerity.

Sir Char. You will not doubt my satisfaction in that event, Mr Mountfort?

Mount. Since I came here, Sir Charles, I have had occasion for so many doubts,——

Sir Char. Things have appeared, to be sure, a little odd.—If the time were a less busy one, I should wish to know from Mr Sedley, if he did not come here to meet Lady Dormer?

Sed. If I came here to meet a lady, it was by advice of Sir Charles Dormer: If I came here with different intentions from what he would have approved of, it was from feelings (old-fashioned feelings he would call them) of my own.—But, in my turn, I should wish, at some less busy time, to know from you, Sir Charles, if you did not come here to meet——

Sir Char. Sir, I believe things may stand as they are, without any questions either on one side or t'other, except a few which I shall take the liberty of discussing with Lady Dormer.

Sed. To her, then, sir, I shall leave the discussion. I am persuaded she will easily vindicate her

conduct; her attention to the ease, the comfort, the happiness of Sir Charles Dormer's family!

Sir Char. I am not at present, Mr Sedley, much disposed for merriment; and, therefore, I shall leave you to the exercise of your wit, and the enjoyment of your virtues! [*Exit Sir* CHAR.

Sed. I am ashamed to think that I should have forfeited that enjoyment for an ambition so silly as the triumph of fashion, or a fear so mean as that of the ridicule of its votaries. Oh, Mountfort! suffer me to call you again my friend, my guide, my father!—You look still doubtfully upon me; but I will find such a surety—Look, where she comes!

Enter JULIA, *Lord* LAPWING, *and* WILLIAM.

Mount. My child! my Julia!

[*Embracing her.*

Jul. My father! Have I then a father?—My head is dizzy to think it.—How could you, Sir, hide him so long from me?

Mount. Accident first prompted the disguise, and circumstances, which I wished to develope, afterwards induced me to continue it. It served to shew me nothing of my Julia to blame, except a

little [illegible] of hereditary feel
ing) [illegible] altogether deserve it.
I S[illegible] deserve it: You told me so
already.—I [illegible] I am afraid I was willing
to forget it.

Sed. To your father, I own, I acted most unworthily. In that perverse hypocrisy by which I wished to conceal my best feelings, I outraged those that were due to him. To Julia I could not be that hypocrite; she knows I could not.

Jul. She knows all the delicacy, the kindness of your conduct towards her.—When my father is more convinced of it——

Mount. Alas! you know not how much he wishes to be convinced of it.—Sedley! To find one of my children lost!

Sed. Receive him back, never to stray again!—[illegible] shall guide, (shall it not, my Julia?) and [illegible] my virtue.

Mount. Take it, and be worthy of it.

[illegible] no more,—under favour, sir,—[illegible] you chose of late. Trust me, you [illegible]

[illegible] was only in masquerade, then, [illegible] to contradict me? I thought

you could not be serious. But this new sort of hypocrisy will add a chapter to my system; "The White Hypocrite;"—Yes, that will do. Apposite and pretty, and not too intelligible. The system of a man of genius should never be too intelligible.

Mount. But tell your white hypocrites, my lord, that the colour of this hypocrisy is apt to grow darker. He who is first such a hypocrite from vanity, or from fear, will be in danger of becoming, in truth, the character he personates. A fool in the attempt, he will be a villain in its accomplishment; and will suffer equally in both. Tell them, my lord, that to be really good is a much shorter way to be happy;—to procure the only reputation an honest man can value; the only happiness a reasonable one can enjoy.

[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE,

SPOKEN IN

THE CHARACTER OF LADY DORMER.

Well, after all that poets say or sing,
Hypocrisy's a very useful thing;
And howsoever plain blunt folks may take it,
The blackest is much whiter than they make it.
Since first the arts of polished life began
To humanize that strange wild beast, called Man,
Hypocrisy was ready in their train
To muzzle passions which she could not chain.
Hypocrisy, the handmaid of the Graces,
If she can't mend our hearts, can make our faces;
And seemings with realities at strife,
Form the *White Hypocrites* of modern life.
True to their names, in savage times of yore
Friendship and hate their genuine aspect wore;
In each extreme, without the forms of art,
They met, and grappled to each other's heart.